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# BUDDHIST MONUMENTS

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DEBALA MITRA M.A.

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SAHITYA SAMSAD

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## PREFACE

The book covers practically all important Buddhist monuments and sites of present India, Pakistan and a part of the Nepalese Tarai which together formed India of the past. Apart from brief notices of various Buddhist places, no less than sixty-eight sites have been individually dealt with.

The description of the sites is based not only on a fresh study of the well-known and little-known published literature but on personal observations in many cases, as I had occasions to visit a large number of sites in India, besides exploring a major part of Orissa and the central part of the Nepalese Tarai. Further, results of my excavations at two important sites—Ratnagiri in Orissa and Tilaura-kot in the Nepalese Tarai—have duly been incorporated. Ratnagiri yielded the spectacular remains of a significant Buddhist establishment, the memory of which, though forgotten in India, lingered in late Tibetan texts. Observations on Tilaura-kot, alleged to be the ancient site of Kapilavastu according to some scholars, have been given in the form of an appendix, as my probe at the site failed to establish the identification of Kapilavastu with the place. I have also taken an opportunity to include the results of my soundings at Lumbini, the birth-place of Buddha.

Considering the size of the book and the number of the sites covered, I had naturally to be brief in description. Consequently, I touched on the salient features and important monuments of the sites, emphasis on description being given in the case of the less-documented sites.

Part I of this book presents a sketch of Buddha's life which had a great bearing on Buddhist monuments and sculptures. In the first portion of Part II, a historical background of the Buddhist monuments from the beginning to the last days has been furnished, while in the remaining portion, evolutions of *stūpas*, monasteries, *chaitya-grihas* and temples—the main components of Buddhist architecture—have been traced with the help of copious illustrations. Parts I and II may, thus, be said to introduce what follows in Part III. In the last Part the monuments and sites are grouped either according to the State or regionwise. Before introducing the sites in a particular group, a preliminary survey of the State or region has relevantly been presented in each case.

I am thankful to Mr. A. Ghosh, the former Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, for his initial instructions to take up this study as part of a project which was later abandoned. I am also beholden to Mr. B. B. Lal, the present Director General of the Survey, for his permission to bring out the book. The Directors of the Shishu Sahitya Samsad Private Ltd.

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The photographs illustrating the book are, unless otherwise stated in the List of Photographs, the copyright of the Archaeological Survey of India: many of them were taken by Mr. K. C. Das, Photographer of the Eastern Circle of the Survey. The line-drawings were prepared by Messrs A. K. Ghose, S. K. Neogy and S. K. Ghosh of the Survey. I avail myself of this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all of them.

New Delhi  
17th May, 1969

*Debala Mitra*

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## PART I

### LIFE OF BUDDHA<sup>1</sup>

The personal name of Buddha, 'the Enlightened', was Siddhārtha,<sup>2</sup> but he was better known by his *gotra* name Gautama. He was also called Śākyasiṃha, 'the Lion of the Śākya', and Śākyamuni, 'the Śākyan sage', as he was born in the Kshatriya clan of the Śākya, of which his father Śuddhodana was the chief. The latter's capital was at Kapilavastu (variantly identified with Piprahwa, District Basti, Uttar Pradesh and Tilaurakot, District Taulihawa, Nepalese Tarai, both near Rummindei). Before his birth, his mother, Mahāmāyā or Māyā, of the family of the Koliyas, had a dream in which she dreamt a white elephant entering her body (photo 1), which was interpreted by the Brahmins as the conception of a son, destined to become either a universal monarch or a Buddha.

On the eve of her confinement Māyādevī proceeded to her native place, Devahrađa, but on the way she was delivered of the child (photos 2 and 62) in the grove of Lumbini (Rummindei, District Bhairhwa, Nepalese Tarai, p. 58). There is no general agreement about the date of his birth. According to the Ceylonese reckoning, it is 624 B.C. Other dates have been suggested, but the generally-accepted ones are 563 and 566 B.C.

The mother died seven days after the birth of the child, and he was nurtured by the affectionate Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, who was both his maternal aunt and step-mother. The sage Asita predicted the future glory of the child.

From his childhood Gautama exhibited a contemplative nature. Having in mind the prophecy of a Brahmin, named Kauṇḍinya, that his son would renounce the world, Śuddhodana assiduously guarded him against all sights of affliction and tried his best to turn Gautama's attention towards worldly interests. The child grew up in luxury, away from all woes.

At the age of sixteen Gautama won in marriage his beautiful cousin, Yaśodharā or Gopā, daughter of Suprabuddha (or Daṇḍapāṇi) and sister of Devadatta, after proving his superiority over others in learning, archery and other princely accomplishments.

The crucial moment arrived when he was barely twenty-nine. The sights of an old decrepit man, a sick man and a dead man on three successive occasions in the course of his drives through pleasure-gardens made him realize the miseries of existence and fleeting character of worldly pleasures. On seeing the serene face of a recluse on the fourth occasion, he decided to renounce the world. The birth of his son, Rāhula, an additional attachment, hastened this decision. In the stillness of night he bade a silent farewell to his sleeping wife and son and left the palace quietly on his horse Kaṇṭhaka, accompanied by his

<sup>1</sup> The life sketched here is not entirely stripped of miraculous incidents, numerous representations of which are found all over the Buddhist world.

<sup>2</sup> He was named Siddhārtha, as his birth fulfilled (*siddha*) the desire (*artha*) of his father for a son. Tathāgata ('he who has attained the truth') was the name often used by Buddha when he spoke of himself.



charioteer Chhandaka, in order to find a solution to the problem of human suffering. The incident (photo 3) is known as the Great Departure (*Mahābhinishkramaṇa*).

After travelling for a distance of 30 *yojanas*, he crossed the river Anomā (variantly identified with Aumi in District Gorakhpur and Kudawa Nadi in District Basti), where he sent back Chhandaka with the present of his ornaments. He cut off his hair,<sup>2</sup> discarded for good the royal attire, took the robe of a recluse (*śramaṇa*) and started on his career of homeless life in quest of truth and liberation from the cycle of rebirths.

In course of his wanderings he became the disciple successively of two teachers, Ārāḍa Kālāma of Vaiśālī (Basarh, District Muzaffarpur, Bihar, p. 74) and Rudraka Rāmaputra of Rājagṛha (Rajgir, District Patna, Bihar, p. 71). Unsatisfied with their teachings, he soon, however, left them. Travelling through Magadha (southern Bihar) he came to Urubilvā (Uruvelā, modern Urel adjoining Bodh-Gaya, District Gaya, Bihar, p. 60) on the bank of the Nairāñjanā (Lalajan). Near the place for six years he went through the ordeal of the severest austerities, which only reduced him to a skeleton (photo 5). But failing to attain the goal by the mortification of the flesh, he decided to take nourishment, just enough to sustain his body. This shook the faith of his five Brahmin associates, Kauṇḍinya, Bāshpa, Bhadrīka, Mahānāman and Aśvajit, who went away disgusted to Rishipatana (Sarnath, District Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, p. 66).

Not long after this, his ceaseless striving bore fruit. He was then thirty-five. One day at daybreak he partook of the *pāyasa* (a sweetened preparation of thickened milk and rice) offered by the village-girl Sujātā. In the evening he received bundles of grass from the grass-cutter Svastika with which he made a seat under a *pīṭal* tree (which afterwards came to be known as the *Bodhi* tree)<sup>4</sup> and sat on it, determined not to rise till the attainment of perfect enlightenment (*bodhi*). In order to thwart his purpose, Māra, the lord of the world of passions, is said to have violently attacked him with his hosts (photos 6 and 131). Gautama, however, remained unmoved on his seat, calling up the Earth to bear witness to his right to the seat. The latter's reply silenced Māra who withdrew discomfited. The same night, perfect Enlightenment dawned upon him. He discovered the Truth he was after, and issued forth as Buddha, the Enlightened, with his intellect clear as crystal.

He lingered near the *Bodhi* tree in blissful contemplation of his newly-acquired knowledge for four weeks, the third of which he spent in walking to and fro<sup>5</sup> and the fourth in thinking out the *Abhidharma*. During the fifth week he lived under the Goatherd's Banyan tree, scrutinizing *Dharma*, when Māra's daughters tried in vain to tempt him.<sup>6</sup> Next week he went to Muchilinda, where he was protected from a shower by the Nāga king Muchilinda (photo 7) with his hoods. On the last day of the seventh week, which was passed under a *rājāyatana* tree, he was offered cakes of barley and honey

<sup>2</sup> The hair along with the crest-jewel, according to the Buddhist belief, was carried by Śakra, the king of gods, to the Trayastrīṃśa heaven, where it was received with great rejoicings and was subsequently worshipped (photo 4).

<sup>4</sup> The area around the tree later on became famous as Bodh-Gaya (p. 60).

<sup>5</sup> His promenade (photo 8) was honoured with a pavilion in later days.

<sup>6</sup> In sculptural representations this incident and the assault of Māra are often combined in one scene (photo 131).



by two merchants, Trapusha and Bhallika, who were on their way from Utkala (part of Orissa) to Madhyadeśa.<sup>7</sup> These two merchants became his first lay devotees (*upāsaka*) by professing faith in Buddha and his *Dharma* (doctrine).

Urged by gods headed by Brahmā, he decided to preach his *Dharma* for the salvation of others and proceeded to Rishipatana (p. 66) where his five former companions, who had forsaken him (p. 2), were residing. He went to them and delivered his First Sermon (photo 9), known in the Buddhist terminology as *dharma-chakra-pravartana* ('setting the Wheel of the Law in motion').<sup>8</sup> Buddha gave an exposition of Four Noble Truths (*catvāri-ārya-satyāni*), namely, (i) *duḥkha* (suffering), (ii) *samudaya* (the cause of suffering), (iii) *nirodha* (the removal of the cause) and (iv) *mārga* (the way leading to the removal of the cause). Existence itself is full of misery, as it is subject to decay, disease and death. There are more causes of suffering, such as the company of the unpleasant, separation from the dear ones, not getting what one desires, and so on. This suffering is primarily due to the craving for pleasures and attachment to and lust for life which lead to rebirth. The cure lies in the removal of the cause; the way to it is to keep clear of two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification and to follow the Middle Path (*madhyamā pratipat*) which leads to the cessation of the effect of past action, the liberation from the chain of rebirths and the end of everything, *nirvāṇa*. This Middle Path is the noble Eight-fold Path (*aṣṭāṅgika mārga*), namely, *samyag-dṛṣṭi* (right views), *samyak-saṅkalpa* (right thoughts), *samyag-vāk* (right speech), *samyak-karmānta* (right action), *samyag-ājīva* (right means of livelihood), *samyag-vyāyāma* (right exertion), *samyak-smṛiti* (right mindfulness) and *samyak-samādhi* (right meditation).<sup>9</sup>

The five ascetics were at once converted and formed the nucleus of the *Saṅgha* (congregation or Order). Next, Yaśa, the son of a wealthy banker of Vārāṇasī (Uttar Pradesh), took to the Order and was soon followed by his parents and wife as lay devotees and by his fifty-four friends as monks. From this time till his death Buddha led an active missionary life, ceaselessly wandering from place to place in Madhyadeśa, preaching his *Dharma* to all without distinction and taking up a fixed abode (*āvāsa*) only during the three months of the rainy season (*varṣā*). His preachings of universal equality and charity in the easily-understood local dialects, logical reasoning and emphasis on the golden mean along with his exemplary life made an irresistible appeal to the popular mind, and people flocked to his faith from all walks of life. The *Saṅgha* rapidly swelled in number,

<sup>7</sup> Madhyadeśa (middle country) of the Brahmanical texts was the land between the Himalayas and the Vindhya bounded on the east by Prayāga (Allahabad) and on the west by Vinasana (in Rajasthan). The eastern limit, according to Buddhist texts, extended up to the border of Bengal and included Magadha and Aṅga (Districts Monghyr and Bhagalpur, Bihar).

<sup>8</sup> In some of the early sculptures, Buddha is depicted as actually touching a wheel in a scene of the First Sermon.

<sup>9</sup> Buddhism was more a schism from Hinduism than a new religion. Like Hinduism it recognized *karma* (deeds determining the state in the next birth) and rebirths. But it was more ethical, as it laid emphasis on the observance of a strictly moral life, the major commandments being abstentions from killing, stealing, lying, drinking and adultery. It, however, denounced Vedic rites, involving sanguinary sacrifices, superstitions and caste which gave a man a status by birth rather than one which he earned by merit and character.



and in order to maintain its discipline and integrity, Buddha laid down a set of rules for the strict observance of his followers.

After the close of the following rainy season, Buddha sent forth his sixty monk-disciples in different directions to preach the *Dharma*. He himself repaired to Urubilvā where he converted the fire-worshipping Kāśyapa together with his brothers and disciples by performing a number of miracles, including the subduing of a serpent in the fire-chapel (photo 10) of Kāśyapa and also walking over the flooded waters of the Nairātjanā (photo 11). Then he went to the hill of Gayāśirsha, where many more converts were made. Thereafter he went to the Supratishṭha shrine in the Yasṭivana (Jethian) near Rājagṛīha (p. 73) to redeem a former promise to King Bimbisāra of Magadha. Bimbisāra received him with the highest honour and made a present of his favourite Veṇuvana (Bamboo-grove). Many localities of the city afterwards came to be associated with Buddha, among which the Gṛidhrakūṭa hill (p. 73) became his favourite resort.

The next important converts were the two friends, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, both disciples of the ascetic Sañjaya Vairāṭiputra. One morning, when the monk Āśvajit was on his daily round of mendicancy, he met Śāriputra, a resident of Nālandā (District Patna, Bihar, p. 85), and in reply to the latter's query informed him that his teacher was Buddha and that the essence of his teachings was as follows:

*ye dharmā hetu-prabhavā hetuṃ teshāṃ Tathāgato hy-avadat  
teshāṃ cha yo nirodha evaṃ vādī Mahā-śramaṇaḥ.*

'Tathāgata (i.e. Buddha) has revealed the cause of those phenomena which spring from a cause and also (the means of) their cessation. So says the Great Monk.'

This verse, epitomizing the teachings of Buddha, which ultimately became the Buddhist creed, appealed to Śāriputra and then his friend Maudgalyāyana, both of whom were drawn into the fold. Later on, they became the two most important disciples of Buddha.

At the request of Śuddhodana, Buddha, accompanied by a train of monks, paid a visit to Kapilavastu, where he performed a few miraculous feats, like walking in mid-air, in order to elicit homage from the proud Śākya. He put up in the Nyagrodhārāma which had been presented to him. On that occasion he ordained Nanda (photo 128), his half-brother, much against the latter's will, and also his son Rāhula. When the boy, at the bidding of his mother, approached Buddha for his patrimony (photo 12), Buddha ordered Śāriputra to ordain him. On the return journey from Kapilavastu to Rājagṛīha, Buddha halted at Amūpiya, in the country of the Mallas, where he converted a large number of Śākya, including his cousins Ānanda and Devadatta, who had come there headed by Upālī, the barber.

Returning to Rājagṛīha, Buddha took his abode in the Śīlavana, where came the wealthy merchant Sudatta, surnamed Anāthapiṇḍika, from Śrāvastī (Saheth-Maheth, Districts Gonda and Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh, p. 77). After conversion, this merchant became a staunch follower of the Master and invited Buddha to Śrāvastī (pp. 75-79), in the suburbs of which he built a splendid monastery in the park of Prince Jeta (in Saheth) after paying the latter as many coins as would cover the ground (photo 13). Another



important monastery near that city was the Pūrvārāma, which Viśākhā, wife of Pūrṇavardhana and daughter-in-law of Migāra, presented to him on a subsequent occasion (p. 76): Śrāvastī became a favourite resort of Buddha, specially during the later part of his life. There he spent the largest number of *varshās* and delivered many important discourses. King Prasenajit of Kosala (Oudh), who came under his influence, often used to visit him.

During the fifth rainy season Buddha was at Vaiśālī (p. 73). At that time he averted an imminent strife between the Śākya and Koliya over the waters of the Rohinī. Before this he had once paid a visit to Vaiśālī in order to relieve the citizens of a frightful pestilence. It was at this place that he was offered a bowl of honey by a monkey (photo 15).

Soon afterwards, Śuddhodana fell seriously ill. Buddha hastened to Kapilavastu and delivered an enlightening sermon, on hearing which the Śākya chief became an *arhat* and entered *nirvāṇa*. Mahāprajāpati requested him to ordain her, but Buddha refused to admit women to the Order and returned to Vaiśālī. But the widowed queen would not give up and along with other ladies, sick of family life due either to bereavement or their husbands who had become monks, proceeded on foot to Vaiśālī. At the importunities of Ānanda Buddha admitted them as nuns, though not without misgivings about the future on that account.

Buddha had a number of powerful rivals, the age being one of great religious upheaval and intellectual ferment in northern India. He was challenged by the leaders of six prominent sects of the epoch, namely, Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, Maskarī Gośālīputra (also known as Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta) of the Ājīvika sect, Ajitakeśakambala, Kakuda Kātyāyana, Nirgrantha Jñātiputra (i.e. Mahāvīra) of the Jaina sect and Saṅjayī Vairāṭiputra. Buddha, however, easily established his superiority by the exhibition of miraculous powers in the *Prātihārya-maṇḍapa* of Śrāvastī in the presence of these teachers and King Prasenajit and a huge congregation. One of the miracles was the multiplication of his own self in different *mudrās* (photo 14), which came to be regarded as one of the great incidents of his life. Immediately afterwards, he repaired to the Trayastriṃśa heaven to preach the *Abhidharma* to his mother, and after passing the ensuing rainy season there, he alighted in the company of Śakra and Brahmā at Sāṅkāśya (Sankissa, District Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh) by means of a staircase provided by Śakra (photo 16).

The eighth *varshā* was passed on the Crocodile hill in the Bhesakalā forest in the Bharga country (between the Yamuna and the lower valley of the Son), and the ninth at the Ghoshitārāma monastery at Kauśāmbī (Kosam, District Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, p. 82), the capital of King Udayana of the Vatsa country. The latter was at first not well disposed towards Buddha, but ultimately became his admirer. During his stay at Kauśāmbī dissensions arose among the monks of the monastery. Having failed to reconcile the contending parties, Buddha, out of disgust, betook himself to the village of Bālakaloṇakāra. After dwelling for some time afterwards at Pārileyyaka he went to Śrāvastī, where the contending parties came, and the dispute was settled in his presence.

After passing the twelfth rainy season near the town of Veraṇjā (Vairambha near Mathura) at the invitation of a Brahmin convert, he visited Soreyya, Sāṅkāśya, Kānyakubja (Kanauj, Uttar Pradesh), Prayāga (Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh), Vārāṇasī



and Vaiśālī. The following *varshā-vāsa* was held at Śrāvastī and Chelikā. The fourteenth rainy retreat was Jetavana. In the same year, he again visited Kapilavastu, where he was insulted by his father-in-law. He next converted a child-eating *yaksha*, stationed at Ālavī (forest tract of central India). Another important convert was the notorious murderer Aṅgulimāla (p. 76) at Śrāvastī. He also visited Aṅga where Anāthapiṇḍika's daughter, a believer in Buddhism, had been married. Though invited by King Pradyota of Avanti with his capital at Ujjayinī, he did not go to that country, which, however, received his message through the converted royal priest Mahākātyāyana.

When Buddha was seventy-two, his royal friend Bimbisāra was murdered by his son Ajātaśatru. Devadatta, craving for the leadership of the *Saṅgha*, made an unholy league with the parricide and plotted to kill Buddha. On one occasion he hired a gang of assassins for this purpose. But when the hirelings (photo 18) saw the Master, they were full of remorse, confessed their guilt and became his converts. On a second occasion, Devadatta hurled a huge block of stone at Buddha when the latter was walking below the Gridhrakūṭa hill. Buddha escaped narrowly with a minor wound in his feet. Next, Devadatta arranged to let loose a maddened elephant, named Nālagiri, against Buddha, when he was on the begging round on a street at Rājagriha. But the infuriated elephant became calm at the sight of the Master and knelt down in homage before him (photo 17). After these repeated failures to kill the Master, Devadatta attempted to create a schism in the *Saṅgha*, which was, however, foiled by Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. Ajātaśatru afterwards became repentant and eventually became a zealous follower of Buddha.

At the age of seventy-nine<sup>10</sup> Buddha in the company of Ānanda, his faithful disciple and attendant, successively visited Ambalatthikā (between Rajgir and Nālandā), Nālandā, Pāṭaligrāma (Patna, Bihar), Koṭigrāma and Nāḍika and halted at Vaiśālī in the mango-grove of the famous courtesan Āmrapālī. He then went to the neighbouring village Beluva, where the last rainy season was passed. There he was taken seriously ill. After recovery he one day resorted to the Chāpāla-chaitya of Vaiśālī where he was visited by Māra (photo 69). At the importunities of the latter, Buddha decided to die at the end of three months from that day. From the Chāpāla-chaitya Buddha went to the Mahāvana-kūṭāgāra-śālā where he gave an enlightening discourse to his disciples.

After bidding farewell to Vaiśālī he proceeded towards Pāvā, halting at places on the way. On reaching Pāvā (variously identified with Padaraona and Fazilpur, both near Kasia), he halted in the mango-grove of Chunda, the smith. Soon after taking the meal offered by Chunda he had an attack of dysentery. But he persisted in his journey till he reached the suburbs of Kuśinagara (Kasia, District Deoria, Uttar Pradesh, p. 70), the capital of the Mallas. There Ānanda, at his bidding, spread a couch between two *śāla* trees on which Buddha laid himself down on his right side and passed away in the last watch of the night at the age of eighty (photo 19). His ministration had been for forty-five years and his last convert was Subhadra, ordained immediately before his death. His last words were 'Decay is inherent in all component beings. Work out your own salvation with diligence.'

<sup>10</sup> A vivid description of the last year of his life is given in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*.

The Mallas cremated his body with ceremonies befitting a universal king. On hearing the news, seven claimants, namely, Ajātaśatru of Magadha, the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī, the Śākya of Kapilavastu, the Bulis of Allakappa, the Koliyas of Rāmagrāma, a Brahmin of Veṭhadīpa and the Mallas of Pāvā, sent messengers for portions of bone-relics in order to erect *stūpas* over them. The Mallas, at first unwilling to share the relics, were brought to reason by a Brahmin, named Droṇa, who divided the remains into eight equal parts. Droṇa himself erected a *stūpa* over the urn in which the remains had been collected and divided. The Moriyas of Pippalivana came after the distribution and had to be satisfied only with the embers. Thus came into existence eight *stūpas* over the corporeal remains, the ninth over the urn and the tenth over the embers.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> There is hardly any comprehensive connected biography of Buddha, and we have to depend for it upon a number of texts and scattered extracts like the *Nidāna-kathā* (general introduction to the *Jātakas*), *Pachchuppanna-vatthu* (introductory portions preceding the different birth-stories), *Nikāyas* (e.g. *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*), *Lalita-vistara*, *Buddha-charita* of Aśvaghosha, *Mahāvastu*, *Abhinishkramana-sūtra* (now preserved only in the Chinese translation, cf. S. Beal, *The Romantic Legend of Sākya Buddha from the Chinese-Sanskrit*, London, 1875), and stray pieces in the *Vinaya-Piṭaka*, besides a few later Buddhist texts of Tibet (cf. W. W. Rockhill, *The Life of the Buddha and the Early History of his Order*, London, 1884), Ceylon (R. S. Hardy, *A Manual of Buddhism*, London, 1880) and Burma (P. Bigandet, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama*, London, 1911, popular re-issue in 1914).



## PART II

### THE MONUMENTS

#### 1. A HISTORICAL SURVEY

Thanks to the pious endeavours of zealous Buddhists, Buddha was never reduced into a mythical figure. The profound influence which he exercised over his followers and the veneration and devotion he evoked in their hearts are almost unparalleled. Every incident of his life, real or legendary, mentioned in the texts, was recorded in terms of sculpture and painting, and every spot associated with him was immortalized and turned into a centre of pilgrimage by his followers who erected, generation after generation, structures in the hallowed memory of the Master. These monuments, very often corroborating the accounts given in indigenous and foreign texts, endow his life with reality and historicity. Indeed, one is overwhelmed by the richness of the Buddhist remains that still survive, though even this number represents only a small fraction of what Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang (photo 59) saw in the fifth and seventh centuries A.D. respectively. Many of the sites (e.g. Mathura) have long succumbed to the forces of nature and depredations of man, while there are still many (e.g. Rāmāvati and Jagaddala), the locations of which have not yet been firmly ascertained.

The earliest Buddhist monuments cropped up in what is known today as Uttar Pradesh with its bordering districts in the Nepalese Tarai and Bihar, which witnessed the drama of the Master's life and activities. The life of Buddha itself had a great bearing on the origin of Buddhist edifices. Monasteries, to provide shelter to Buddha and his homeless disciples during the rainy season, had already come into existence during the lifetime of the Master. At some of the important centres of his activities, such as Rājagriha (p. 73), Śrāvastī (pp. 75 and 76) and Kauśāmbī (p. 82), monasteries were built up by his lay devotees and admirers, who thus set the custom which was subsequently taken up by royal personages.

On his death-bed, Buddha himself had suggested that *stūpas* should be erected over his mortal remains. This injunction lay at the root of the *stūpa*-cult, which made the worship of corporeal relics enshrined in *stūpas* an essential feature of early Buddhism. As we have seen above (p. 7), ten *stūpas*, including the two built over the urn and embers, sprang up immediately after his demise. Even during his lifetime *stūpas* might have been erected over the remains of some of his leading disciples. *Stūpas*, symbolizing the Master, remained for a long time afterwards the sole object of worship among the Buddhists in the absence of images of Buddha and consequently of shrines to house them.

The places associated with Buddha were many; and some of them gained great renown in subsequent days as leading centres of Buddhism. Of them, the Four Great Places, named by Buddha in reply to Ānanda's query about the objects to be seen and venerated after the Master's demise—Lumbinī (p. 58) where the Tathāgata was born



(photo 62), Bodh-Gaya (p. 60) which witnessed his Enlightenment (photo 32), Sarnath (p. 66) where the First Sermon was delivered (photo 9) and Kuśinagara (p. 69) where he passed away (photo 19)—continued to be embellished with monuments of varied kinds. These are regarded as sacred even today by the Buddhists all over the world. Four other places, though of a somewhat lesser importance in Buddha's life, namely, Sankissa where he descended from the Trayastriṃśa heaven (p. 5; photo 16), Śrāvastī (p. 75) where he performed miracles in order to confound the six heretical teachers (p. 5; photo 14), Rajgir (p. 71) where he tamed Nālagiri (p. 6; photo 17) and Vaiśālī (p. 73) where he was offered a bowl of honey by a monkey (p. 5; photo 15), similarly became the scene of monumental activities through subsequent centuries.<sup>1</sup> These eight important events of Buddha's life (Eight Great Miracles) were often depicted in a condensed form on the stelae of images of Buddha (photo 20) in later period.

With the passage of time, Buddhism overstepped the boundaries of Madhyadeśa, its cradle-land, in the extension of the geographical horizon of which Aśoka, the Great Maurya Emperor (circa 273-36 B.C.), took a leading role. At the beginning of his career, the Emperor followed the traditional policy of conquest and aggrandizement. But his conquest of Kalinga, involving a huge massacre, death and captivity, brought about a radical change in him. Shocked by the horrors of war he gave up his ambition of *dig-vijaya* in favour of *dharma-vijaya*. Being impressed by the message of Śākyamuni, he employed, with his characteristic enthusiasm, all his resources for the dissemination of the religion. For the edification of the people he inscribed rocks and pillars with his exposition of the merits of non-violence, tolerance, justice, charity, purity, truthfulness, etc. His *dharma-ghoṣa* was heard throughout India. According to the Buddhist tradition, he built the Aśokārāma<sup>2</sup> at Pāṭaliputra (Patna) and opened seven out of the eight original *śāriṛika-stūpas*<sup>3</sup> (p. 7) and took away the major portion of relics for distribution among eighty-four thousand *stūpas* built by him throughout his empire. Though the number is obviously an exaggeration, there can be no doubt about the kernel of truth in the tradition itself. Indeed, the Chinese pilgrims, Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang, saw a number of *stūpas* built by Aśoka which still remain unidentified.

The brick *stūpa* (p. 23) inside the stone casing of the Great Stūpa (Stūpa 1, photo 37) at Sanchi (p. 97) was constructed by Aśoka, who also planted a stone pillar in front of it. The original core (pp. 23 and 24) of the Dharmarājikā (*stūpa*) at Sarnath (p. 67) is also ascribed to him. As at Sanchi there is also a pillar, bearing the Emperor's edicts, in front of this *stūpa*. The inscribed monolithic pillars of Aśoka have been found at several places, e.g. Meerut (now in Delhi), Topra (now in Delhi), Lumbini (pp. 58 and 59; photo 60), Nigali-sagar (District Taulihawa, Nepalese Tarai), Rampurva,

<sup>1</sup> The venues for Eight Great Miracles (*aṣṭa-mahā-pratīhārya*) came to be known as *aṣṭa-mahā-thānūni* (Eight Great Places).

<sup>2</sup> Though the monastery (Aśokārāma) named after Aśoka has not been identified so far, the remains of the *Ārogya-vihāra* of the Gupta period, besides a number of other monasteries of diverse plans (a few consisting of blocks of two or three rooms with a common verandah in front), were unearthed near the Maurya Pillared Hall at Kumrahar in the suburbs of Patna.

<sup>3</sup> Aśoka's attempt to open the *stūpa* of Rāmagrāma was said to have failed due to the opposition of the *nāgas*.



Lauriya-Nandangarh (p. 84, photo 21), Lauriya-Arara, Kausāmbī (now at Allahabad), Sanchi (p. 97) and Sarnath (p. 66). Most of them were originally surmounted by beautifully-carved capitals (photo 65), consisting of lotuses and animals. The pillars, all of the Chunar sandstone, are still distinguished by the exquisite polish they bear. Many of the pillars seen by the Chinese pilgrims are no longer extant. It is not unlikely that the pillars, wherever they are *in situ*, indicate the existence near by of *stūpas* built by Aśoka. There is undoubted inscriptional evidence (photo 61) of Aśoka's personal visit to Lumbinī (p. 59) and Bodh-Gaya (p. 61), two of the Four Great Places of pilgrimage. The polished sandstone seat (*vajrāsana*, 'diamond-seat', of Buddha), found within the present pedestal of the temple at Bodh-Gaya (p. 61), is believed to be his gift on the occasion of his visit to that place. Hiuen Tsang found at this place a number of structures including a *stūpa* built by Aśoka. The Emperor also enlarged the *stūpa* of Kāṇakamuni, one of the six Mānushi-Buddhas (p. 95, fn. 4) who are said to have preceded Gautama Buddha. The rock bearing his edicts at Kalsi (near Dehra Dun, Uttar Pradesh) has a line-drawing of an elephant with the label, *gajātame*, the best of elephants, theriomorphically representing Buddha who entered his mother's womb in this form in a dream (p. 1). He also carved the fore part of an elephant above the rock bearing his edicts at Dhauli, near Bhubaneswar (District Puri, Orissa).

Aśoka took active interest in the *Saṅgha* and prescribed certain texts for the study of the monks and nuns. In order to maintain the integrity of the *Saṅgha*, he promulgated edicts against schism. Thus, in his edicts on the pillars at Sarnath (p. 66), Kausāmbī (the pillar removed to Allahabad) and Sanchi (p. 91), he ordered that heretical monks and nuns should be compelled to wear white robes in place of the monks' saffron and should be expelled from the *Saṅgha*. It was during his reign, says the *Mahāvamsa*, that the Third Buddhist Council (*Mahā-saṅgīti*), which seemed to have been exclusively of the Theravādins, met at the capital, Pāṭaliputra, to refute the views of the unorthodox non-Theravādins, under Moggaliputta Tissa (Upagupta in the northern texts), when the *Kathāvatthu* was compiled. After the conclusion of the Council, missionaries under learned teachers were deputed to proceed in various directions. Thus, Majjhantika (Madhyāntika) was sent to Kashmir (p. 107) and Gandhāra (p. 115), Mahārakṣita to the Yavana (Greek) country, Majhima (Madhyama) to the Himalayan region, Mahādharmaṛakṣita to Mahārāṣṭra, Yavana Dharmarākṣita to Aparānta (northern Konkan), Mahādeva to Mahishamandala (probably Mysore), Rakṣita to Vanavāsa (Banavasi, District North Kanara), Mahendra, son of Aśoka, to Laṅkā (Ceylon) and Soṇa and Uttara to Suvarṇabhūmi (Far East or Burma). This tradition of the *Mahāvamsa* is partly corroborated by the inscribed relic-caskets found at Sanchi (p. 98) and Sonari (p. 91). Aśoka's edicts also refer to his missions to countries outside India. Thanks to his proselytizing work, the religion, which had been mostly confined to Madhyadeśa, then spread not only throughout the length and breadth of India, but to Ceylon and some other parts of Asia.

The Maurya age also saw the construction of apsidal and circular sanctuaries with possibly *stūpas* as objects of worship, of which only the foundations and plinths have so far been located at Sanchi (pp. 46 and 98) and Bairat (p. 42).



The new life which Aśoka infused into the religion of Śākyamuni and the impetus which he gave to the Buddhist building arts were not extinguished when the Maurya empire fell to pieces. The Mauryas were followed by the Śuṅgas (second and first centuries B.C.) and later on by the Kānvas (first century B.C.) in the north and the Śātavāhanas (first century B.C. to the third century A.D.) in the Deccan and south-eastern India. During the regime of these powerful dynasties, though there was no ruler who took up the cause of Buddhism in the manner of Aśoka, building activities continued on an accelerated pace due to the piety of an increasing number of lay devotees of means (*śreṣṭhīs, sārthavāhas, grihapatis*, etc.). The wealth specially of the rich mercantile community, a large percentage of whom formed the class of lay disciples, was utilized in erecting Buddhist edifices. Every pious Buddhist tried to contribute whatever he could; the poor came forward with their offer of skill and labour; and thus grew up a large number of Buddhist monuments including the celebrated *stūpas* at Sanchi (p. 97; photo 37) and Bharhut (pp. 92 ff.) in central India and the Mahāchaitya (p. 200) at Amaravati in south-eastern India. One can say that in no other period of the history of Indian Buddhism did art and architectural activity reach such a high pitch of popular participation. So long the *stūpas* had been built in brick; the preference was now for stone, so that the edifices might be everlasting. People were not satisfied with giving mere permanency; they wanted to embellish the edifices, to make them things of beauty and attraction. At Bharhut and Sanchi they selected sandstone railings (photos 39 and 76) and gateways (photo 77) for the purpose, leaving the solemn *stūpa* austere and plain. The bare look of the *stūpa*, however, did not find favour with the devotees of Amaravati, who beautified it with luxuriantly-carved limestone slabs (photo 22).

The object of these carvings being to glorify Buddha, it was natural that the themes were generally edifying in nature, depicting *Jātakas* (p. 94), Mānushi-Buddhas (p. 95, fn. 4) and scenes from the life of Buddha (photos 1, 4, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15 and 16), but mundane scenes—at times even amorous—and floral and plant motifs were not unoften utilized in embellishments. Buddha himself was represented symbolically whenever a scene required his portrayal, as the Buddhists were at that time under the convention of representing him by symbols like footprints, wheel, vacant throne, promenade (*chaṅkama*), *tri-ratnas*, Bodhi tree and *stūpa*. The details of the episodes from even the *Jātakas* and life-scenes leave no room for doubt that the reliefs were conditioned by popular, secular and even sensuous art of the times with only such changes as were thought necessary to impart to them their Buddhist colour.

Of about the first century B.C. is the sandstone railing (photo 64) around the *vajrāsana* (Buddha's seat below the Bodhi tree) at Bodh-Gaya (p. 61) which bears an affinity to the railings at Sanchi.

The evidence of Sanchi (pp. 97 and 98), coupled with Andher (pp. 91 and 98), Satdhara (pp. 91 and 97) and Sonari (pp. 91 and 98), proves that the example set by Aśoka in the dissemination of the Master's relics was at this period followed not only in respect of his direct disciples like Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana but in the case of the later dignitaries of the *Saṅgha* as well. Portions of their bones were evidently collected from their original resting-places for enshrinement in *stūpas* erected in different parts of India.



This period also saw the growth and development of Buddhist rock-cut architecture. The idea of the rock-cut caves evidently was derived from natural caves (e.g. Indrāsāla cave where Buddha was said to have been visited by Śakra, p. 73). The excavation of caves was not an innovation of the Buddhists. It was in vogue even earlier. Aśoka himself had caves excavated for the use of the Ājivikas. From the beginning of the second century B.C. onwards a predilection for the rock-cut caves was noticed in the Deccan in places like Bhaja (p. 151), Kondane (p. 161), Ajanta (p. 175), Pitalkhora (p. 171), Nasik (p. 168), etc. The volcanic rock of this region was found suitable for this kind of architectural treatment. Out of the live rock the Buddhists made beautiful monasteries (photos 45 and 46) for the congregated monastic life and *chaitya-grihas* (p. 47; photos 50, 51 and 97). These were in reality translations of the structural ones. Their façades and pillars were often carved and their walls and ceilings embellished with paintings, many of which illustrated tales from the *Jātakas*.

After the fall of the Mauryas, north-western India was subjected to successive waves of foreign invasions of diverse nationalities. First came the Bactrian Greeks, then the Scytho-Parthians and ultimately the Kushāns, with the result that a composite culture was evolved in this area, in which there was considerable amount of Hellenistic impact. Indeed, Buddhist art and architecture of this region were marked by an intermingling of Hellenistic and indigenous influences. Some of the foreign invaders were attracted by the religion of Śākyamuni, which freely admitted them into its fold. A large number of extant inscriptions in the Kharoshthī script, recording gifts, by these foreigners, of *stūpas*, *vihāras* and other objects of Buddhist association, bear eloquent evidence of the flourishing state of Buddhism in this region. The remains of the Buddhist edifices of various magnitudes also point to the same conclusion.

Two foreign rulers were particularly remembered for their patronage in the Buddhist texts. One of them was the Indo-Greek king Menander (circa 115-90 B.C.) immortalized in the work entitled *Milinda-pañha* (Question of Milinda or Menander) and the other Kanishka (circa A.D. 78-101), the Kushān king. Under the auspices of the latter, the Fourth Buddhist Council was convened to discuss the various interpretations of Buddha's sayings as given by different teachers. Tradition associates him with a galaxy of renowned *āchāryas* like Nāgārjuna, the great exponent of the Mādhyamika philosophy, Aśvaghoṣa, the author of the *Buddha-charita* and the *Saundarānanda*, Vasumitra, the president of the Fourth Buddhist Council, Pārśa, the teacher of the Sarvāstivāda School, Dharmatrāta and Ghoshaka. The *stūpa* (pp. 118-20) which Kanishka built at Purushapura (Peshawar), his capital, was one of the largest of its kind in India, and it elicited wonder and admiration for many centuries. Some of his coins bear representations of Buddha. The inclusion of territories like Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia within his kingdom helped in the dissemination of Buddhism in these regions too.

The Śaka Satraps, who ruled central and western India from the second century A.D. till their fall at the hands of the Guptas towards the end of the fourth century, were also favourably disposed towards Buddhism. Some of the caves of western India were their gifts. The monastery, known as Mahārāja-Rudrasena-vihāra, at Intwa (p. 141), 3 miles from the rock containing the edicts of Aśoka at Junagarh in Gujarat, was most



probably built by the Śaka Satrap Rudrasena I (A.D. 199-222). The queen of the Ikshvāku king Virapurushadatta (second half of the third century A.D.), a Śaka princess belonging to the Satrapal family of Ujjain, made lavish donations to the Buddhist establishment at Nagarjunakonda (p. 206, fn. 16).

The beginning of the Christian era was an important landmark in Buddhist religion and art, as the Fourth Buddhist Council, held during the reign of Kanishka, officially recognized the emergence of the Mahāyāna, a reoriented form of Buddhism which was more philosophical and less ethical than the early Buddhism. It marked a fundamental division in the *Saṅgha* and the Buddhist doctrines, the beginning of which was latent much earlier. The goal of this new form of Buddhism was the salvation of all beings, as distinct from the salvation of the individual which was the aim of Hinayāna (or Śrāvakayāna), the primitive Buddhism with its restricted and puritan outlook. According to the Mahāyānists, anybody could become a Buddha by the greatest acquisition (*pāramitā*) of virtues like *dāna* (liberality), *śīla* (moral precepts), *kṣānti* (forbearance), *vīrya* (energy), *prajñā* (knowledge), *satya* (truthfulness), etc. This paved the way for the emergence of a host of Bodhisattvas.<sup>4</sup> By bringing the religion within the reach of the laity the Buddhists secured the support of the masses.

Simultaneously with the liberal interpretation of the doctrine was evolved the image of Buddha, a manifestation of *bhakti*, which incidentally met a genuine spiritual craving and devotional impulse of the masses. Buddha was no longer a teacher or even a superman whose presence was to be indicated by symbols; he was deified, and the common mind was satisfied by embellishing and ceremonially worshipping the images of the saviour with prayers and incantations of the god's redeeming grace. Self-discipline, spiritual practice and ethical teachings, free from rituals, as required in the orthodox school, were relegated to a comparatively minor place in Buddhist practice.

The priority of the claims of the Schools of the north-west, commonly known as Gandhāra, and Mathura as the first iconographer of Buddha is still controversial. Available evidence points to the simultaneous appearance of images in both these regions during the reign of the Kushān king Kanishka. Based on the Indian conception of a great man (*mahā-purusha*) with his distinctive marks (*lakṣaṇas*), both, independent of each other, created the image of the Master in their own way by reliance upon altogether independent art-traditions and techniques. The result was that a great amount of variance was expressed in their respective productions. The Mathura artists took the figures of folk divinities like *yakṣas*, with which they were familiar, as their model, and the images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, executed in the local speckled red sandstone, attained a heavy masculine form expressive of superabundant physical energy, which was devoid of spiritual expression (photo 23). In course of time, influenced by the ideology of *yogācāra*, this earthy physical frame shed off all its weight and heaviness and steadily transmuted itself into the graceful and luminous figure (photo 24) of the Gupta period.

<sup>4</sup> Bodhisattva is a being whose goal is *bodhi* (enlightenment), i.e. who is in the process of obtaining but has not yet achieved Buddhahood. Gautama was a Bodhisattva not only in his previous births (p. 94), but in his last birth till he became Buddha. Some of the later Bodhisattvas, out of great compassion for the suffering humanity, pledged themselves never to seek Buddhahood till all beings are redeemed.



In the Buddhist images produced by the Gandhāra School, one sees by contrast the Indian myths and iconographical concepts in the Hellenistic garb. The model for the figures was provided by Greek divinities like Apollo, and in the execution also Hellenistic technical details are fairly obvious. For four hundred years this School produced countless sculptures (photos 5 and 26), delineating in great detail the incidents of Buddha's life (photos 3, 18 and 19) from birth to death, real and legendary, as gathered from the Buddhist texts and traditions, as well as the figures of Bodhisattvas. The media in these cases were the locally-available schist and stucco. Though this art failed to take deep root in the Indian soil, its importance in conditioning the Buddhist art of Afghanistan and neighbouring regions including Central Asia was very great. This School came to an end about the end of the fifth century A.D., when most of the Buddhist centres of the north-west, including Taxila, faced disaster at the hands of the ruthless Hūnas who were hostile to Buddhism.

The introduction of the image of Buddha met with universal approval, as is evident from the rapid strides with which the practice of representing Buddha in person spread far and wide. Mathura<sup>5</sup> for some time catered to the needs of a large part of northern, central and eastern India as is testified by the occurrence of the images of the *atelier* of Mathura at Sanchi (p. 98), Sarnath (p. 67), Kausāmbī (p. 82), Saheth (p. 77), Berachampa (West Bengal), Shaikhan Dheri<sup>6</sup> (near Charsada, West Pakistan), Lumbini (p. 60), etc. Among the south-eastern Schools, Amaravati took the cue at once and started making images of its own. Fired with this innovation the artists of Amaravati (photo 17), and in its wake Nagarjunakonda (photo 126), Goli (photo 128), Gummadiidurru (photo 130) and other Andhra centres, went on carving slab after slab with figures of Buddha whom they had so far represented by means of symbols only. They also made free-standing images (photo 25), no doubt, meant for enshrinement in temples, which in the earlier examples were of the apsidal plan derived from *chaitya-grihas*. In the rock-cut caves the figures of Buddha were introduced. A shrine-chamber was, in course of time, added to most of the monasteries, while the *stūpas* in *chaitya-grihas* were relieved with figures of Buddha. The walls and façades of not only the new caves but the old ones also were embellished with figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, either in relief or in painting.

Under the Ikshvākus (third and the first half of the fourth centuries A.D.) their capital

<sup>5</sup> Both inscriptions and sculptures attest to the existence of a flourishing Buddhist centre here. Thus, the Mathura Lion-capital inscriptions, of about the beginning of the first century A.D., record the establishment of a *stūpa* and a monastery by the chief queen of Mahākshatrapa Raṣṭrjuvula, a Śaka. Again, the Mathura Buddhist image inscription of Huvishka, dated in the year 51, commemorates the consecration of an image of Buddha by a monk in the Mahārāja-devaputra-vihāra, evidently established by Huvishka. Mathura (ancient Madhuravana) had many more *viḥāras*, e.g. Guhā-vihāra, Mihira-vihāra, Prāvārika-vihāra, Yaśā-vihāra, Khaṇḍa-vihāra, Roshika-vihāra, Krauṣṭakiya-vihāra, Kakātikā-vihāra, Chetiya-vihāra, Śrī-vihāra and Svarnakāra-vihāra. The School of Mathura, which produced the earliest image of Buddha in the indigenous style, found its fulfilment (photo 24) in the Gupta age which gave a new orientation to the earlier form. For a long time, the Mathura School exercised considerable influence on the major portion of northern and central India. Unfortunately, not a single monument of this centre has survived. However, a large number of sculptures representing Buddha and Bodhisattvas, reliefs depicting scenes from Buddha's life and *Jātakas* and architectural pieces have been found sporadically in and around the city.

<sup>6</sup> *Ancient Pakistan*, vol. II (1963-66), p. 42 and pl. XVIII, 4.



Vijayapuri (represented by modern Nagarjunakonda, p. 204) became an important Buddhist centre. In spite of their Brahmanical faith, these rulers were favourably disposed towards the religion of Śākyamuni. An additional incentive was provided by the Buddhist female members of the royal seraglio. In such a congenial atmosphere there is no wonder that Nagarjunakonda became a Buddhist pilgrimage in the third century A.D. A *chaitya-griha* was specifically constructed for the teachers of Ceylon who preached the religion in various places including Kāśmīra, Gaṇḍhāra, Chīna (China), Chīlāta (Kīrātā), Tosali (Dhauli in Orissa), Avaramta (northern Konkan), Vaṅga (parts of eastern, and southern Bengal), Vanavāsī (in North Kanara District), Yavana (Greek colony), Damila (Tamil country), Palūra and Tamraparṇi (Ceylon).

The fourth century saw the establishment of the Gupta empire in northern and eastern India and the kingdom of the Vākātakas in the Deccan. Though Hinduism was in ascendancy under the active patronage of the Gupta rulers, Buddhism, under an atmosphere of toleration, flourished equally, as may be seen not only from archaeological evidence but also from literary sources including the record of the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien, who travelled over the country between A.D. 399 and 414. By this time, many of the Buddhist centres stepped forward in producing Buddhist images of their own which were remarkable improvements over the Gandhāra hybrids and the archaic Mathura sculptures. Among these, Sarnath received the greatest celebrity. The images of Buddha produced by this School remained unparalleled in artistic form and content through all ages. Robed in transparent garments and endowed with idealized modelling and superb grace and repose, they, like yogis, absorbed and withdrawn, glow in their spiritual luminosity and highest realization (photo 9). Though extant bronze images (photo 79) are not as prolific as their stone counterparts, they exhale, as typified in the life-sized figure of Buddha from Sultanganj (Bihar), the strong accent of Gupta art. The images of Buddha and a few of the Bodhisattvas like Padmapāṇi, Vajrapāṇi and Maitreya interested the Gupta artists more than anything else. Among the life-scenes, the eight great events (pp. 8 and 9; photo 14) became prominent and were often represented in one stele.

Once the worship of images came into vogue, temples to enshrine the images could not lie far behind. People were no longer satisfied with the *chaitya-grihas* with their apsidal and circular plans. The Gupta age, in which the plastic conception found its fullest expression, inaugurated a new epoch in architecture also. There were experiments in various forms, and one of the earliest intact specimens is Temple 17 (p. 52; photo 56) of Sanchi. It is a flat-roofed structure built of stone, consisting of a square sanctum preceded by a pillared porch, not very different from an ordinary dwelling room. Unfortunately, very few Buddhist temples have survived, though there must have been many, as attested not only by inscriptions and architectural fragments, but by the literary evidences of Hiuen Tsang. The Mūla-gandha-kūṭi of Sarnath (p. 67) belongs to the Gupta period. The nucleus of the Mahābodhi temple (photo 54) at Bodh-Gaya (pp. 53, 54 and 62), which, as it stands today, is a late nineteenth-century overhauling of the Burmese restoration belonging to the end of the thirteenth century and still earlier mediaeval restorations, is evidently earlier than the seventh century, as the description given of it by Hiuen Tsang is applicable to a large



extent to the present temple. According to Hiuen Tsang, a similar temple, rising to a height of 300 ft., was built at Nālandā by Bālāditya (p. 88).

The construction of shrines for a time being hardly affected the building of *stūpas*, which continued to be erected as before (a good example being the Dhāmekh Stūpa at Sarnath, photo 66). Due to the dearth of body-relics, texts of the *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra*, tablets with the Buddhist creed and images of Buddha were enshrined within the *stūpas* during this period. The earlier *stūpas*, having special sanctity, were enlarged as in the case of the Dharmarājikā at Sarnath (p. 67).

The emergence of temples did not in any way affect the excavation of rock-cut *chaitya-grihas* till the eighth century A.D. On the contrary it was practised on a grander scale at places like Ajanta (p. 177; photos 111 and 112) and Ellora (p. 184; photo 53). The walls of rock-cut caves and their pillars were embellished with rich carvings.

What Sarnath achieved in plastic art, Ajanta (pp. 177 f.) attained in its paintings (photos 12 and 113). Its sphere of influence extended beyond the confines of India to Central Asia and Ceylon. The contemporaneous caves of Bagh were also decorated with paintings of the mature Ajanta tradition.

In the seventh century A.D. Buddhism found a staunch supporter in Emperor Harshavardhana (A.D. 606-47) of Kanauj. A glowing account of his activities has been left by the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang (photo 59) who was in India from A.D. 630 to 644. From his records it is clear that some of the old Buddhist centres, including Kapilavastu, had been deserted, while several new centres had come into existence. The monastic establishment of Nālandā (p. 86) had already attained the status of a university where flowed streams of foreign students from all corners of the Buddhist world. Harshavardhana's contribution towards the maintenance of this establishment was immense. The revenue of a hundred villages is said to have been given by him for its maintenance. Hiuen Tsang spent a number of years in this establishment in studying texts, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist. The disciplined life and erudition of the Nālandā monks were considered worthy of emulation and induced other Chinese students, including I-tsing who landed at Tāmralipti in A.D. 673, to take admission to this institution. The latter has left a detailed account of the life of the monks there.

The Pālas (eighth to twelfth century A.D.) of eastern India, the Chandras (tenth and eleventh centuries A.D.) of eastern Bengal and the Bhaumas (eighth to tenth century A.D.) of Orissa were devout Buddhists, and under their active patronage a number of new Buddhist centres sprang up in this region. Of the Buddhist monasteries built by the Pāla rulers, the Somapura-mahāvihāra (p. 240)—a quadrangular monastery with a terraced edifice (photo 141) in the centre, the largest of its kind in India,—founded by Dharmapāla (circa A.D. 770-810), the second Pāla king, the Vikramasīlā monastery (probably at Antichak-Patharghata near Colgong, District Bhagalpur, Bihar, p. 57, fn. 1), also built by Dharmapāla, Odantapuri-mahāvihāra (sited at Bihar Sharif near Nālandā) and Jagaddala-mahāvihāra, established by Rāmapāla (circa A.D. 1077-1120) in Varendrī (northern Bengal) won international fame. Some of the Buddhist luminaries of these monasteries including Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna Atiśa (circa A.D. 980-1053), head of the Vikramasīlā establishment, went to Tibet. The Pāla rulers, in spite of their establishing



new monasteries, did not neglect the establishment of Nālandā, which kept its prestige as a focal centre unimpaired till its end. Its international importance can easily be realized from the fact that the Śailendra king Bālaputradeva of Sumatra built a monastery there, for the maintenance of which Devapāla (circa A.D. 810-50), the third Pāla ruler, granted five villages at the request of the former (p. 86). Padmasambhava of this Mahāvihāra was responsible for the introduction of Tibetan Lamaism. Of the Buddhist establishments in Orissa, Ratnagiri-mahāvihāra (p. 226), of which the nucleus was laid in the Gupta period, but which attained real celebrity from the seventh century onwards, had an important place in the contemporary Buddhist world and was the resort of some of the most famous Buddhist teachers. Myriads of images of Buddha (photo 27) and other deities (photo 33) with widely-varied iconography in conformity with the growing expansion of the Buddhist pantheon are found here and also in the neighbouring hills of Lalitagiri and Udayagiri.

The period gave a great incentive not only to sculptors but also to metal-casters. The school of two artists, Dhīman and Bitpālo, is mentioned by Lāmā Tāranātha in his *History of Buddhism in India* (A.D. 1608). Bronze images have been found in abundance in Achutrajpur (p. 225), Nālandā (p. 89; photo 28) and Kurkihar (p. 90; photos 29, 74 and 75) and to limited extent at Paharpur (p. 243), Mainamati (p. 246), Paharpur-Fatehpur, Patharghata (photo 30), Jhewari (Chittagong, East Pakistan), Sirpur (p. 103) and Ratnagiri (p. 232). Another great centre of bronze-casting was Nagapattinam (p. 197; photos 31 and 42) in the south. Here as many as three hundred and fifty bronzes were found amidst the ruins of the monastic establishment flourishing during the rule of the Cholas, to which resorted a colony of Buddhists from Malay Peninsula and Sumatra, with the active help of the Śailendras. The Śailendra king Māravijayottuṅgavarman completed here the construction of a *vihāra*, called Chūlāmaṇivarmavihāra, in memory of his father.

The rule of the Pālas also saw the growth of Tantric Buddhism, which developed a highly esoteric yogic system of *sādhana* with belief in the efficacy of magic spells and *mantras* and practice of *mudrās* (physical postures), *maṇḍalas* (mystical diagrams), *kriyās* (rites), etc. Its genesis went back to the early mediaeval period. The Mahāyāna form of Buddhism, with these adventitious elements, transformed itself almost beyond recognition into Vajrayāna (a convenient name of Tantric Buddhism, also known as Kālachakrayāna and Sahajayāna in its later developments) with its main focus in eastern and south-eastern India. The elementary pantheon of a few Bodhisattvas and Tārā was developed into an elaborate one with Ādi-Buddha, Dhyāni-Buddhas and their emanations in the persons of a host of divine Bodhisattvas and their female energies, entirely incompatible with the original creed of Buddha. With the growth of varied iconography in competition with that of Brahmanical deities, there grew up also an elaborate liturgical literature, the *Sāadhanamālā*, with *dhyānas* embodying new iconographical and religious concepts. An overwhelming number of images (photo 30), in stone and bronze, conforming to the *dhyānas*, have been found at Ellora, Nālandā, Bodh-Gaya, Kurkihar, various localities in Bengal and Orissa (photo 33), Salihundam, Amaravati and far south in Nagapattinam. Even a casual study of these images and texts shows that the *dhyānas* are 'abstracted iconography' of the images and the images are 'the *dhyānas* visually represented'.



The images belonging to the reign of the Pālas and their successors in Bihar and Bengal were overwhelmingly numerous, forming a special school with the icons of other creeds. But one cannot help noticing in them a gradual tendency towards ostentation and exuberance (photo 32) in contrast to the restrained grace of the earlier productions. Concurrently with this, there was a predilection towards stylization, notwithstanding the bewilderingly-varied iconographical features, resulting ultimately in monotonous repetitions, which were due, no doubt, to the failure in creative vitality and weakness in aesthetic vision and execution. Lacking in spirituality, the latest images became dull and lifeless.

The same remark is applicable to the Orissan School in its later phase, as practised during the reigns of the later Somavamśis (end of the tenth to the beginning of the twelfth century) and Gaṅgas (twelfth to fifteenth century). This Buddhist art became hardly distinguishable from the art of Orissa in general.

From the twelfth century onwards there was a marked decline in the building art also. By the close of this century almost all the important centres of northern, western and central India were affected by Muslim invasions, and there began a period of rapid decline. In the beginning of the thirteenth century, the structures of the Vikramaśilā-mahāvihāra which was situated on the way from Delhi to Bengal, were razed to the ground by the invaders, who out of wrath were said to have uprooted even the foundations and threw them into the Gaṅgā. The same fate was met with about this time by the Odantapuri-mahāvihāra (p. 16) which had been turned into the headquarters of a garrison of Muslim soldiers who, in about A.D. 1197 under Muhammad-bin-Bakhtyār Khilji, committed such a complete massacre of the shaven-headed monks of the fortified *vihāra* that not a single soul was left to acquaint them with the contents of the books stored in its library. The same garrison was ultimately instrumental in the destruction of the establishment of Nālandā. Before that many of the monks had left the country. Buddhasena (second quarter of the thirteenth century A.D., p. 64), ruler of Magadha, and his descendants, all professing Buddhism, were too weak to stand before the avalanche of Muslim invasion and soon succumbed to the new conquerors. Jagaddala, in northern Bengal, was also swept away by the Muslims not long afterwards.

With their treasury sacked and munificent endowments—their main prop—robbed, the Buddhists were even unable to repair the edifices deliberately damaged by the new conquerors. Any fresh building, therefore, was out of the question in these turbulent times. Shorn of support and with monks either dispersed or prey to the ruthless massacre of the invaders, Buddhism fast died out in this region. It, however, continued to exist for a few centuries more in the eastern districts of Bengal, as well as in a few isolated places in Bihar, Orissa and south-eastern coastal plains. Here also it was rapidly losing ground due to increasing want of donations and endowments, of both the rulers, who were now Muslims, and the laity, not as whole-hearted and well-organized and disciplined as the Jains, as their conversion was only superficial, their mental constitution saturated with Brahmanical concepts and their domestic rites of birth, marriage and death were guided not by the monks but by the Brahmins. In fact, it was the Buddhists of Ceylon and south-eastern Asia who were striving in this epoch to sustain the



flickering light in the homeland of the religion. We find in the second half of the thirteenth century, a Ceylonese monk, a master of the *Tripitaka*, in charge of the establishment (p. 64) attached to the Mahābodhi temple, the cost of the repairs of which was defrayed by the Burmese towards the end of that century (p. 65). Another Ceylonese teacher repaired the double-storeyed temple at Amaravati (p. 201) in the fourteenth century. The flourishing state of the Buddhist centre at Nagapattinam (pp. 195 ff.) was mainly due to the zeal of the colonists from Malay Peninsula and Sumatra and the Chinese.

The factors responsible for the decay and ultimate disappearance of the religion were, thus, many. With the adoption of an immense pantheon of gods and goddesses, Buddhism developed pronounced leanings towards Tantric elements and lost its individuality and justification for existence as a separate religion as distinct from Brahmanical Tantricism. The ground was, thus, prepared for its re-absorption into the main body of Hinduism from which it came out as a revolt. The radically-reoriented religion evoked protests from the orthodox monks of Ceylon and Sindh. According to the Tibetan monk Dharmasvāmin (p. 64) and Lāmā Tāranātha, the Ceylonese Śrāvakas at Vajrāsana described Vajrayāna as being foreign to the teachings of Buddha. They put into fire many *mantra* books, destroyed the silver image of Heruka and tried to convince the pilgrims about the uselessness of the Vajrayāna teachings. The Śrāvakas also became supreme, according to Tāranātha, in the Odantapuri establishment before the Muslim conquest. Dharmasvāmin generalizes about the condition of Buddhism in India in the third decade of the thirteenth century when he remarks: 'In general, one can say, that in India the non-Buddhists were numerous, the Śrāvakas were fewer, and the followers of the Mahāyāna even fewer'.<sup>7</sup> With the secret rituals and practices confined only to the initiated, Vajrayāna developed an exclusive spirit and lost popular appeal. The rise of Sahajayāna tried to mitigate the situation to a certain extent in Bengal. The worship of such fierce deities as Mahākāla, who was invoked to devour one who did not show respect to the *Tri-ratnas* and preceptors, was entirely foreign to Buddha's message of *ahimsā*. The highly symbolic language of the esoteric Tantric writers (e.g. the representation of *prajñā*, highest knowledge, and *upāya*, the way to attain *prajñā*, as female and male and their union as *sexo-yogic* practices) had an adverse effect on the monks and nuns of small understanding and not-very-rigid morals who indulged in corrupt practices, undermining the moral prestige of the religion.

The rational and highly ethical teachings of Buddha were, thus, smothered under a load of gross superstitions, ritualistic worship<sup>8</sup> of a host of deities and an immoral life,

<sup>7</sup> G. Roerich and A. S. Altekar, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin* (Patna, 1959), p. 87.

<sup>8</sup> Even bands of dancing girls were freely introduced to serve the image of Buddha. Thus, the Gaya inscription of the year 1813 of the Nirvāṇa era (*Indian Antiquary*, X, 1881, p. 344) says in connection with the restoration of the temple of Bodhi-Gaya:

'Since in the religion of Bhagavat, worship is here (offered) to the most worshipful, always three times a day, by means of instrumental music in the highest key (*pañcamagata*) together with Rambhā-like Bhāvinis and Chetis dancing round wonderfully with mirth in singing and so on, in a way appertaining to the unions of Anariga (Kāma)—(worship) increased by hospitable entertainments'.



against each of which Buddha had led a ceaseless crusade. Disdained by the enlightened, not backed by the exclusive devotion of the half-hearted laity, and without any powerful ruler to support, the religion began to wither away very fast. To precipitate matters, there came the irresistible flood of a revived Vaishnavism, which, with its attractive doctrine of equality and *bhakti*, caught the popular imagination at once and drew adherents in immense numbers and to which Buddhism, already a spent-up force, too weak to counteract, could not but succumb. At the same time, Vaishnavism was liberal enough to recognize the greatness of Buddha and to acknowledge him\* as one of the ten incarnations of Vishnu. Thus, unlike in other parts of India where Buddhism hardly survived the blow of the non-Buddhists, e.g. the Hūnas in the north-west and the Muslims in the north, in this particular region it died a natural death about the fifteenth-sixteenth century. The only parts of India and Pakistan where the faith has survived amidst a small section of the population are Chittagong (in East Pakistan) and its neighbourhood bordering Burma, Darjeeling bordering Nepal, North Eastern Frontier Agency and Ladakh and adjoining hilly region bordering Tibet.

Thus ended the history of Buddhist monuments in its homeland. The abandoned structures were in course of time reduced to shapeless mounds by the destructive forces of nature, the process of destruction having been furthered by the depredation of treasure-hunters. One can expect to gain at least a tolerably good picture of the lower portion of the edifices which have a protective mantle of the débris of superstructure over and around them and which are at the same time untouched by greedy hands. In many instances, however, human cupidity has been responsible for the entire disappearance of the structures (e.g. Bharhut, p. 92).

Even the names of the majority of these establishments were forgotten. Though a number of such sites have been identified through the persevering efforts of archaeologists, still there are many awaiting their reclamation. Even the sites of several of the establishments, the memory of which survives in literature, still remain to be located.

\* Jayadeva invokes the benign Buddha as the ninth incarnation of Vishnu in the following words:

*nindasi yajña-māher-āhaha śruti-jālam  
 sadaya-hṛdaya-darīta pañc-ghātam |  
 Keśava dhṛita-Buddha-īarira  
 iaya jagadīśa hare ||*

## 2. ARCHITECTURE

### A. THE *stūpa*

*Stūpas* (Pāli *thūpa*, Anglo-Indian 'tope'), derived from the root *stūp* ('to heap'), are mounds or tumuli. Originally, they had a funerary association, being mounds containing the ashes and charred remains of the dead collected from the funeral pyre. The practice of erecting *stūpas* over corporeal relics was pre-Buddhist. In reply to Ānanda's query about the ceremonies to be performed after the demise of the Master, Buddha remarked that his bones, left after cremation, should receive the honours of a universal monarch by *stūpas* erected over them at the crossing of four highways. Indeed, the custom was not peculiar to India alone; it was only an adaptation of the world-wide practice of burying the dead under a tumulus or cairn. Among the Buddhists, however, it assumed an importance unprecedented in any other cult or community. They made such an extensive use of this particular form of structure as an object of supreme veneration<sup>1</sup> and sanctity and developed it along their own lines to such an extent that in course of time *stūpas* were converted from simple mounds of earth into ostentatious structures of great architectural magnificence and became the chief emblem of the Buddhist faith. To a Buddhist, the erection of a *stūpa*, even of sand, was an act of profound merit.

*Stūpas* are known in Ceylon as *dāgāba*, this being derived from Pāli *dhātu-gabbha* (Sanskrit *dhātu-garbha*, 'structure containing within its womb, *garbha*, corporeal relics, *dhātu*').<sup>2</sup> The term *chaitya*, derived from *chitā*, 'funeral pyre', was generally used by the Buddhist in the sense of a *stūpa* (e.g. Mahāchaitya of Dhānyakataka), though in its wider connotation, it included a temple, a sacred tree (*vrksha-chaitya*) and even an image of Buddha.

The Buddhist *stūpas* may be grouped into four broad categories: (i) *śārīrika*, (ii) *pāribhogika*, (iii) *uddeśika* (memorial) and (iv) votive. The first category, *śārīrika*, signifies those erected over the corporeal relics of not only Buddha, but also of his chief disciples as well as of Buddhist teachers and saints.<sup>3</sup> Throughout India reliquaries (photos 34, 35, 86 and 123) containing bones and ashes have been found enshrined in many *stūpas*; but it is only in a few instances that the reliquaries bear the names of the persons concerned.

The second category of *stūpas*, *pāribhogika*, was built over the objects believed to have

<sup>1</sup> Originally containing the relics of Buddha and thus symbolizing the *parinirvāṇa* of Buddha, the *stūpa* later on stood for the Master himself in the eyes of the votaries, who wanted some concrete form for worship to satisfy their religious emotions, as the image of Buddha had not then been evolved. The worship of the *stūpa*, however, continued in full swing even after the introduction of the image of Buddha.

<sup>2</sup> There are instances of the dedication of rock-cut pillars containing body-relics (*sasavira thabho*); cf. *chaitya-griha* of Karla (p. 156).

<sup>3</sup> According to Buddha, four kinds of persons are worthy of a *stūpa*: a Tathāgata, a Pratyeka-Buddha, a disciple of the Tathāgata and a universal monarch.



been used by Buddha, like begging-bowl, robe, etc. Hiuen Tsang mentioned a number of *stūpas* of this kind.

The third category, *uddelika*, was commemorative of the incidents of Buddha's life, including those of his previous births, or spots hallowed by his presence. Both Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang saw a large number of such *stūpas* (e.g. the eye-gift *stūpa* at Pushkalāvati).

Besides the above, there were countless votive *stūpas*, small in size, mostly erected by the pilgrims when they visited the sacred sites for attaining religious merit.<sup>4</sup> A large percentage of these *stūpas* was monolithic (They are found mostly in places where stone is readily available.), though the number of brick, stonework or metal ones was by no means small. The monolithic *stūpas* frequently contained figures of Buddha and Buddhist deities (usually carved out of the monolith itself) in their niches. Though the structural ones, i.e. those of brick and stonework, sometimes had images in their niches, they often contained within their core images of Buddha and Buddhist deities, manuscripts of the Buddhist texts (p. 113; photo 83), tablets or plates inscribed with the sacred *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra*, the Buddhist creed (p. 4) with or without Buddhist images and symbols, and *dhāraṇīs* (protective magical charms).

The *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra* and the Buddhist creed were considered as of paramount importance by the Buddhist, as they record the essence of Buddha's teachings. I-tsing did not fail to notice this widely-prevalent practice. 'The priests and the laymen in India make *Kaityas* (*chaityas*) or images with earth, or impress the Buddha's image on silk or paper, and worship it with offerings wherever they go. Sometimes they build *Stūpas* of the Buddha by making a pile and surrounding it with bricks. They sometimes form these *Stūpas* in lonely fields, and leave them to fall in ruins. Any one may thus employ himself in making the objects for worship. Again, when the people make images and *Kaityas* (*chaityas*) which consist of gold, silver, copper, iron, earth, lacquer, bricks, and stone, or when they heap up the snowy sand (lit. sand-snow), they put in the images or *Kaityas* (*chaityas*) two kinds of *Sarīras*. 1. The relics of the Great Teacher. 2. The *Gāthā* of the Chain of Causation.'<sup>5</sup> The fact that the *gāthā* was called *sarīra* shows that it had assumed the sanctity of the relic of Buddha himself. Further, according to him, the merits derived from enshrining the two kinds of *sarīra* are enormous: 'Even if a man make an image as small as a grain of barley, or a *Kaitya* (*chaitya*) the size of a small jujube, placing on it a round figure, or a staff like a small pin, a special cause for good birth is obtained thereby, and will be as limitless as the seven seas, and good rewards will last as long as the coming four births.'<sup>6</sup>

The practice of embedding tablets with the Buddhist creed was in fact prevalent throughout the length and breadth of India. At Paharpur (p. 243) and Mainamati (p. 246), for example, several thousands of tiny unburnt clay *stūpas*, each encasing two clay tablets inscribed with the Buddhist creed, have been found deposited in the core of votive *stūpas*.

<sup>4</sup> The Buddhist pilgrims, no matter how poor, used to make, as an expression of their piety, during their visit to any sacred spot, an offering which generally took the form of votive *stūpas* in the case of the rich and clay tablets inscribed with the Buddhist creed (p. 4) in the case of the poor.

<sup>5</sup> I-tsing, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, translated by J. Takakusu (Oxford, 1896), p. 150.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.



The idea behind the insertions of *dhāraṇīs* inside votive *stūpas* is clearly explained in an inscription found in Orissa, which states that the construction of a *chaitya* with a deposit of a *dhāraṇī* inside it confers on the donor the blessings of the erection of one lakh of *Tathāgata-chaityas*.<sup>7</sup> Several *stūpas* at Ratnagiri (p. 228) yielded terracotta plaques and stone slabs bearing *dhāraṇīs*.

Even if we dismiss the tradition of the *stūpas* having been built over the hair and nail-parings of Buddha by his followers during his lifetime, there is little doubt that *stūpas* came into existence immediately after his demise<sup>8</sup> (p. 7). Unfortunately, we possess hardly any information about the construction of these earliest *stūpas*, as none of them has been identified with certainty, though relics of Buddha have been recovered from several *stūpas* of a later period. If the *stūpa* recently uncovered at Vaiśālī (p. 75) is identical with the one said to have been built by the Lichchhavis at that place over the remains of Buddha, the earliest Buddhist *stūpas* were low mounds, made up of layers of piled-up mud.<sup>9</sup> The form, therefore, displayed hardly any improvement over its primitive prototype of the pre-Buddhist period, i.e., the earthen funeral mounds. The layers of piled-up mud in this *stūpa* were separated from one another by thinner layers of *kankar* and cloddy clay. The most interesting feature of this small *stūpa*, originally 25 ft. in diameter, is the projections at four cardinal directions, prototypes of the *āyakas* of the lower Krishna valley. The excavators did not notice any drum (*medhi*) around it. That it was enlarged four times is sufficiently indicative of its importance. The first enlargement,<sup>10</sup> made with bricks, 15 in. × 9 in. × 2 in., has been ascribed to the period of Aśoka. In this enlargement also the four projections were perpetuated.

The definitely-dated earliest *stūpas* are those which were built by the Maurya Emperor Aśoka who played a unique role in the dissemination of the *stūpa*-cult (p. 9). He distributed the contents of the seven out of the eight *śāririka stūpas* among innumerable *stūpas* built by him. He also enlarged the *stūpa* of the Mānushi-Buddha Kanakamuni (p. 10); his pillar recording the event was found by the side of Nigali-sagar, 13 miles to the north-west of Lumbini (p. 58). But we do not get a complete picture of the *stūpa* built by him, as most of them, including the *stūpa* of Kanakamuni, are either unidentified or lie within the core of the later enlargements. The nuclear *stūpas* within the later enlargements of Stūpa 1 (p. 97) of Sanchi and the *stūpa*, known as Dharmarājikā (p. 67), of Sarnath were the work of Aśoka. The exact shape of the former could not be made out owing to the wanton wreckage inflicted on it even before the stone encasing of the Śuṅga period. Made of bricks (16" × 10" × 3") in mud mortar, this *stūpa* was an unpretentious structure, presumed to be 60 ft. in diameter (including the *medhi*), crowned

<sup>7</sup> *Epigraphia Indica*, XXVI (1941-42), pp. 171ff.

<sup>8</sup> Even during his lifetime *stūpas*, which were, no doubt, mere mounds of earth, were said to have been erected over the relics of his disciples (e.g. Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana) who predeceased him.

<sup>9</sup> The two sepulchral barrows (M and N) opened by Bloch at Lauriya-Nandangarh (p. 84) were also found in horizontal layers of clay, a few inches thick, alternating with layers of straw and leaves, but the base of Mound N was found, on subsequent excavations, to have been buttressed up by brickwork.

<sup>10</sup> A piece of the Chunar sandstone with the Mauryan polish was found amidst the debris of this enlargement (cf. *Journ. Bihar Research Society*, Buddha Jayanti Special Issue, Vol. 11, p. 6).



by a *chhatra* (symbol of paramountcy) of the Chunar sandstone. The Aśokan nucleus of the Dharmarājikā is somewhat better documented. It was a hemispherical dome (nearly 48 ft. in diameter) of brickwork with a terraced drum or *medhi* (less than 60 ft. in diameter) as the base; the dome was surmounted by one or more umbrellas (*chhatrāvalī*), the latter set within a square railing. The major portion of the dome was found missing, so that its height could not be determined. Thus, the Aśokan *stūpa* was already a development of the earlier form—a hemispherical mound set up on the ground—the innovation being the introduction of a low cylinder or drum to serve as a base for the object of worship. The top of the drum was also utilized as an elevated processional path in many regions.

Of the same period was the *stūpa* of solid brickwork at Piprahwa (p. 79), which yielded among other things corporeal relics (p. 80) within a casket (photo 35) inscribed in characters of about the third century B.C. This *stūpa* shared with a few other *stūpas*, like those at Bhattiprolu (p. 214), Ghantasala (p. 216) and Gotihawa<sup>11</sup> (District Taulihawa, Nepalese Tarai), one interesting feature: a pipe-like hole<sup>12</sup> in the centre of the core of the *stūpa*.

The reign of the Śuṅgas and the Sātavāhanas saw the construction of a large number of magnificent *stūpas* at Bharhut (pp. 92-96), Sanchi (pp. 97 and 98), Andher (p. 91), Sonari (p. 91), Satdhara (p. 91), Amaravati (p. 200), Bhattiprolu (p. 213), Jaggayyapeta (p. 211), etc., of which the best preserved is Stūpa 1 (fig. 1; photo 37) at Sanchi. Encasing the brick *stūpa* of Aśoka with a veneer of hammer-dressed stones, this well-known *stūpa* was converted in the second century B.C. into an almost hemispherical dome (*aṇḍa*) flattened near the top and crowned by three superimposed umbrellas (*chhatrāvalī*) with their shaft (*yashī*) set in the centre of a stone base (called *harmikā*)<sup>13</sup> within a square railing (*vedikā*). A high circular drum (*medhi*), approached by a balustraded double stairway (*sopāna*) on the south and meant for circumambulation, was built around the dome. The diameter of the *stūpa*, which was enlarged to about twice its original size, is 120 ft., and the height, excluding the railing and umbrella, is 54 ft. The surface of the dome was plastered. A second stone-paved pathway for circumambulation was provided at the ground-level by an encircling stone ground-balustrade (*vedikā*) demarcating the sacred precinct from the outside. The ground-balustrade consists of a series of uprights (*stambha*) connected by three cross-bars (*sūchī*), the lenticular ends of which are mortised into the sockets of the former. This is

<sup>11</sup> The *stūpa* and the adjoining pillar (lower portion available) are of the period of Aśoka.

<sup>12</sup> In the mounds called M and N at Lauriya-Nandargarh (p. 84) was noticed a hollow shaft, about 10 in. in diameter, running right through the centre from the bottom up to a little below the deposits of burnt human bones and a gold leaf. The shaft most probably indicates the position of the wooden post which had perished. At the bottom of the mound N, which was dug down to the natural soil, was actually found the stump of a wooden pillar *in situ*. Significantly enough, the *Duryāvodāna* (Cowell and Neil's edition, p. 244) mentions the setting up of a pillar, called *yāpa*, in the interior of the dome. King Devānampiyatissa, Ceylonese contemporary of Aśoka, is stated in the *Mahāvamsa*, a Ceylonese text, to have erected a stone pillar to mark the site of the Mahāthūpa to be constructed in future by King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi.

<sup>13</sup> The cubical member serving as the base of the shaft of the umbrella is known as *harmikā* (literally, a small pavilion). Some of these *harmikās* (e.g. one at Pitalkhora, p. 174) have, on their façade, representations of a pavilion.

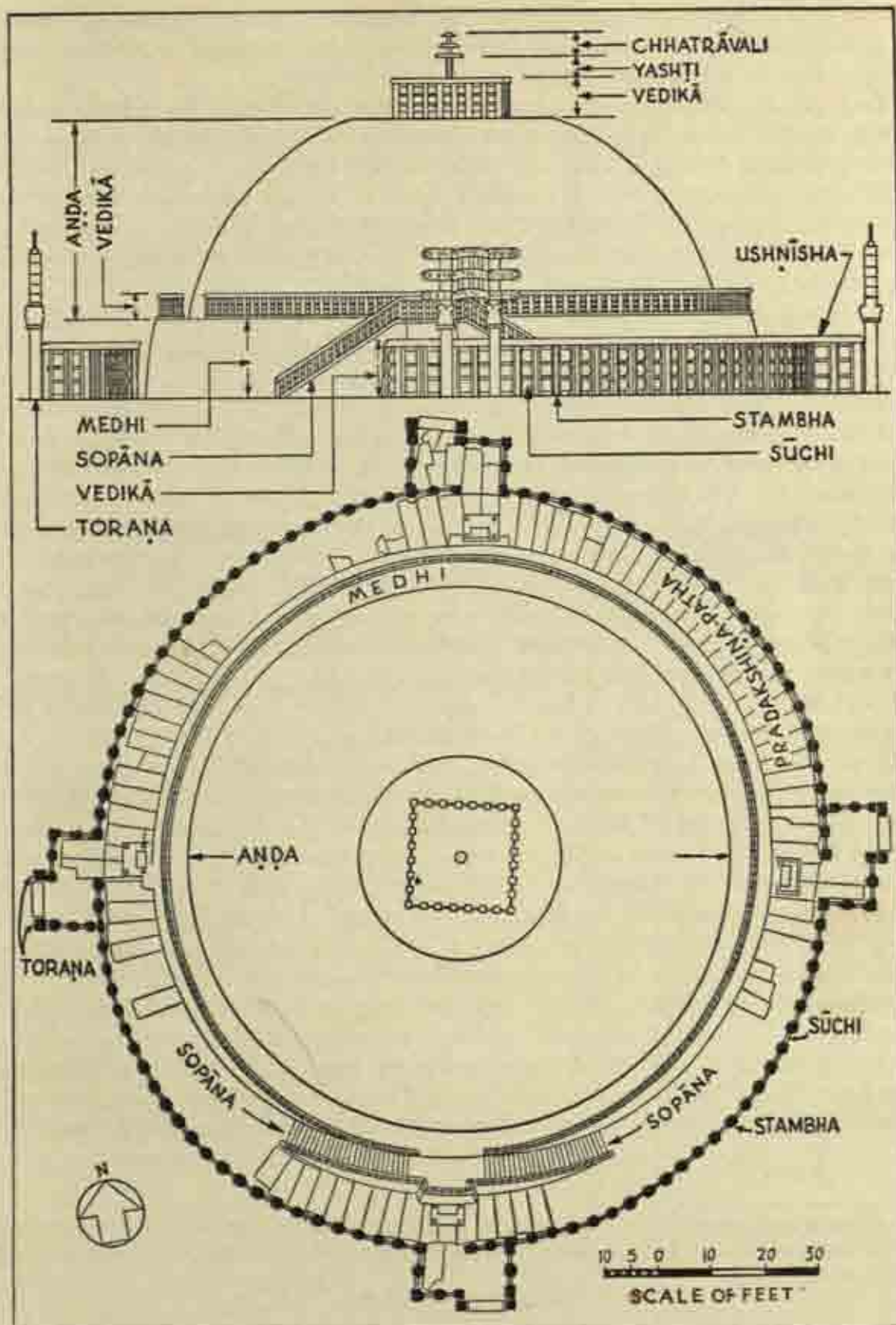


FIG. 1. Sanchi: Stūpa 1, plan and elevation



crowned by a continuous coping (*ushnisha*). The edges of the drum also have a balustrade. The ground-balustrade is divided into four quadrants with entrances, formed by L-shaped projections of the railing, roughly in the cardinal directions.

Each of the entrances was embellished after a century with a lavishly-carved gateway (*torana*) consisting of two squarish pillars with capitals supporting a superstructure of three curviform architraves with voluted ends (fig. 2; photo 77). Between the architraves, separated from one another by four square blocks, are inserted three uprights, the interspaces of which are decorated with figures of riders on elephants and horses. Projecting from the abaci of the capitals of the pillars and supporting the ends of the lowest architraves are bracket-figures. Crowning all, in the centre of the topmost architrave is a *dharma-chakra*, flanked by *yakshas* and *tri-ratna* symbols, two of each. In the construction of the lithic balustrade and gateways, the technique of wooden constructions is clearly manifest. Indeed, the assemblage of curvilinear architraves, struts between the architraves and pillar-capitals is an obvious implementation of carpentry-practice.

The description given above of Stūpa 1 at Sanchi is more or less applicable to other contemporaneous stūpas of northern and central India, built immediately before and after the Christian era. The balustrades and gateways are not always invariable features of the stūpas. At Sanchi itself, Stūpa 2 (pp. 97 and 98), of the second century B.C., has no gateways, and its four entrances are formed of the L-shaped extensions of the quadrants of the balustrade, while Stūpa 3 (p. 97) was provided in the first century A.D. with only one gateway. The stūpa of Bharhut (p. 94-96) was embellished with a ground-balustrade and gateways (photos 39 and 76), these being the oldest examples in stone. The extant balustrade bears a close affinity to those of Sanchi, but it is richly carved. The gateways, however, are not as rich in carvings as the Sanchi ones, which are, indeed, unique of their kind in India.

A distinctiveness is displayed by the slightly later specimens found in south-eastern India, specially in the lower Krishna valley. At Amaravati (p. 203), Bhattiprolu (p. 214), Jaggayyapeta (p. 211), Ghantasala (p. 216), Nagarjunakonda (p. 207), etc. the drums of the stūpas were provided with an oblong projection (fig. 3), called *āyaka*, at each of the four points of the compass. On the top of the projections was a row of five pillars, called *āyaka-kumbas*,<sup>14</sup> a unique feature of the stūpas usually confined to a relatively limited area in the lower reaches of the Krishna. The absence of a stairway giving access to the drum (*medhi*) precludes the possibility of the latter's use as a processional path. In the *Mahāvamsa* the *medhi* is known as *pupphādhāna* (place for depositing flowers). It is not unlikely that the drum was used for identical purpose in this part of India. Important stūpas of this region present stone railings; but gateways of the type of Sanchi are absent, the entrance-openings in some instances (e.g. Mahāchaitya at Amaravati) being formed by the right-angled extensions of the quadrants of the railings. Several of important stūpas at Nagarjunakonda had no rail at all; instead, they had a raised brick or stone-faced platform, approached by a flight of steps, around the drum.

<sup>14</sup> These pillars, square below and octagonal above, have affinity with the Brahmanical *yūpas* or sacrificial posts, e.g. the one found at Bijayagadh, Cunningham, *Arch. Surv. Ind. Rep.*, VI (Calcutta, 1878), pp. 59 ff. and pl. VIII.

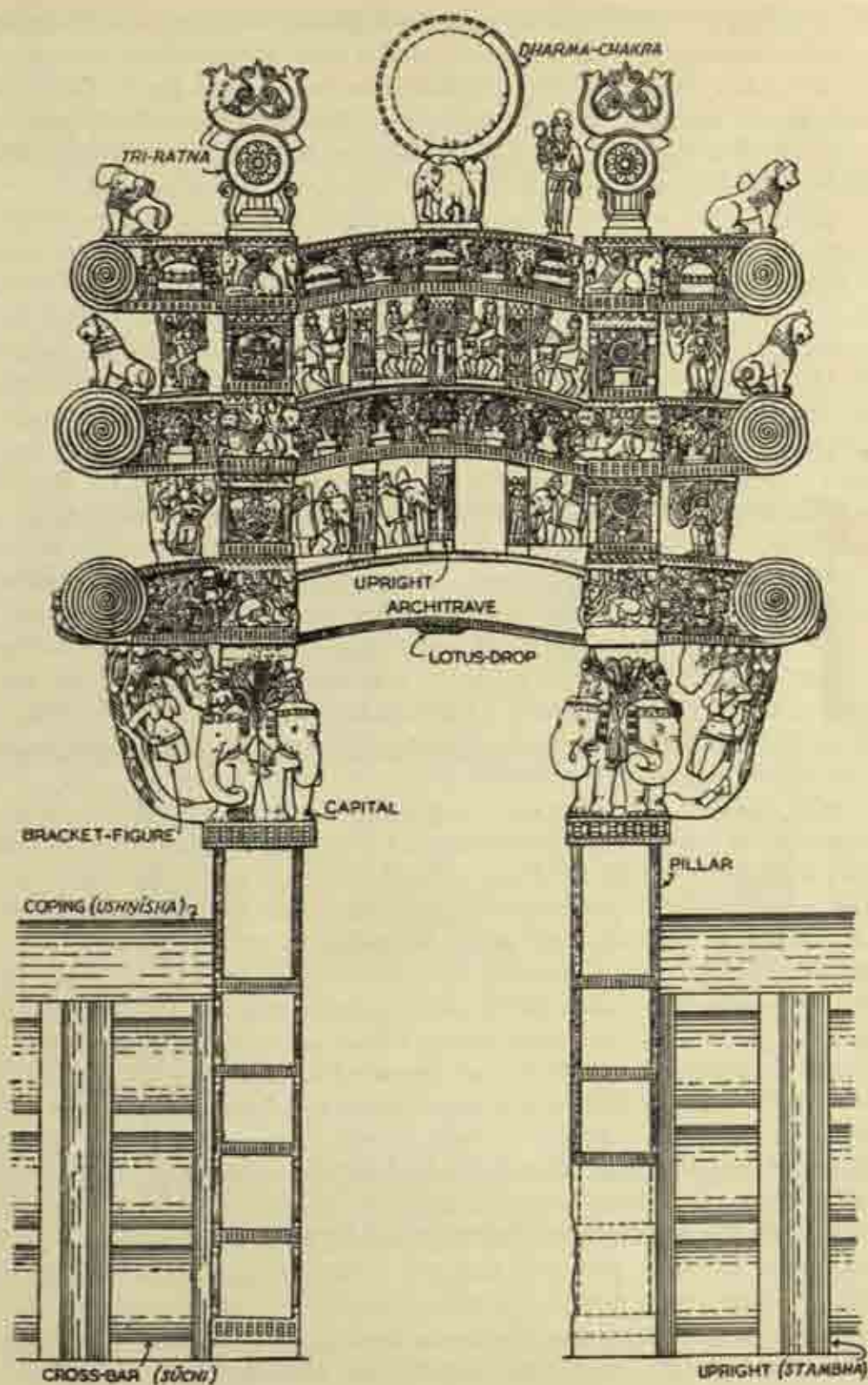


FIG. 2. Sanchi; northern gateway of Stūpa 1, front elevation



Once consecrated, the Buddhist would not demolish a *stūpa*, however damaged it might be in the course of time. Rather, they would renovate or encase it within a larger envelope (*āchchhāday*), this act being considered as one of great merit. Such renovations and encasings are found at many places, e.g. Manikyala (p. 128), Taxila (p. 125), Sarnath (p. 67), Sanchi (p. 97), Vaiśālī (p. 75) and Ratnagiri (p. 227), the Dharmarājikā of Sarnath having as many as six successive enlargements of this kind.

The earliest *stūpas* were built solid. But in later times when ostentatious *stūpas* of great height came to be erected, the tendency was towards economization of the building material—brick or stone as the case may be—by filling the core with earth or rubble. As this method was found unsatisfactory for large-sized ones, various other expedients were tried to secure additional strength. In some cases a network of walls like box-chambers was built, the interior of the chambers being filled in with earth. Another device, which was very popular in south-eastern India (e.g. Nagarjunakonda, Ghantasala, Alluru, etc.), though not unknown in other parts of India, was to build a structure, simulating a wheel, with a hub, spokes and a rim all complete, the last forming the face (fig. 3) of the dome. In the larger examples, the radiating spokes were further strengthened with additional walls, circular and radial, the intervening spaces being filled in with earth or alternate layers of concrete and earth. The system of walls in the centre sometimes took the form of a *svastika* (e.g. the largest of the three *stūpas* at Pedaganjam, District Guntur, and three *stūpas* at Nagarjunakonda), the motive behind the selection of this and the wheel-pattern being most probably symbolic. A third expedient, though not very common, was the construction of a well-laid floor above the earth-packing, repeated at regular intervals in the height; the flooring might have been of brick as at Jaggayyapeta (p. 211) or of concrete as at Garikapadu.<sup>15</sup>

The relic-chamber was generally constructed in the centre of the *stūpas*, though there are several instances (e.g. Mahāchaitya at Nagarjunakonda) where the relics were found away from the centre and without relic-chambers. The device might have been resorted to in order to foil the attempts of treasure-hunters. Five relic-caskets (photo 123) were found inside the southern *āyaka* of the Mahāchaitya at Amaravati.

From the Kushān period onwards *stūpa*-architecture underwent a gradual transformation, the course of evolution being towards elongation and accentuation of heights of the accessory parts. Thus, the drum (*medhi*), which was inconspicuous or comparatively low in earlier examples, grew in height as compared with its diameter and turned into a tall cylinder. Ultimately, it became so elongated that it dominated the entire scheme, the dome (*anda*) proper—the principal element of the *stūpa*—sinking to a comparatively subordinate position (photo 38). Relieved with rows of mouldings on the body, the drum of such *stūpas* often contained projected niches, as in temples, to accommodate images of Buddha or other divinities of the Buddhist pantheon. Four images of Buddha were installed at four cardinal points of Stūpa 1 at Sanchi in the Gupta period. Such structures, therefore, served the dual purpose of a *stūpa* and an image-house. In the later period, specially in Gandhāra, the drum was built in diminishing terraces (photo 36), the façade of the latter being very elaborately embellished.

<sup>15</sup> A. Rea, *South Indian Buddhist Antiquities* (Madras, 1894), p. 3.

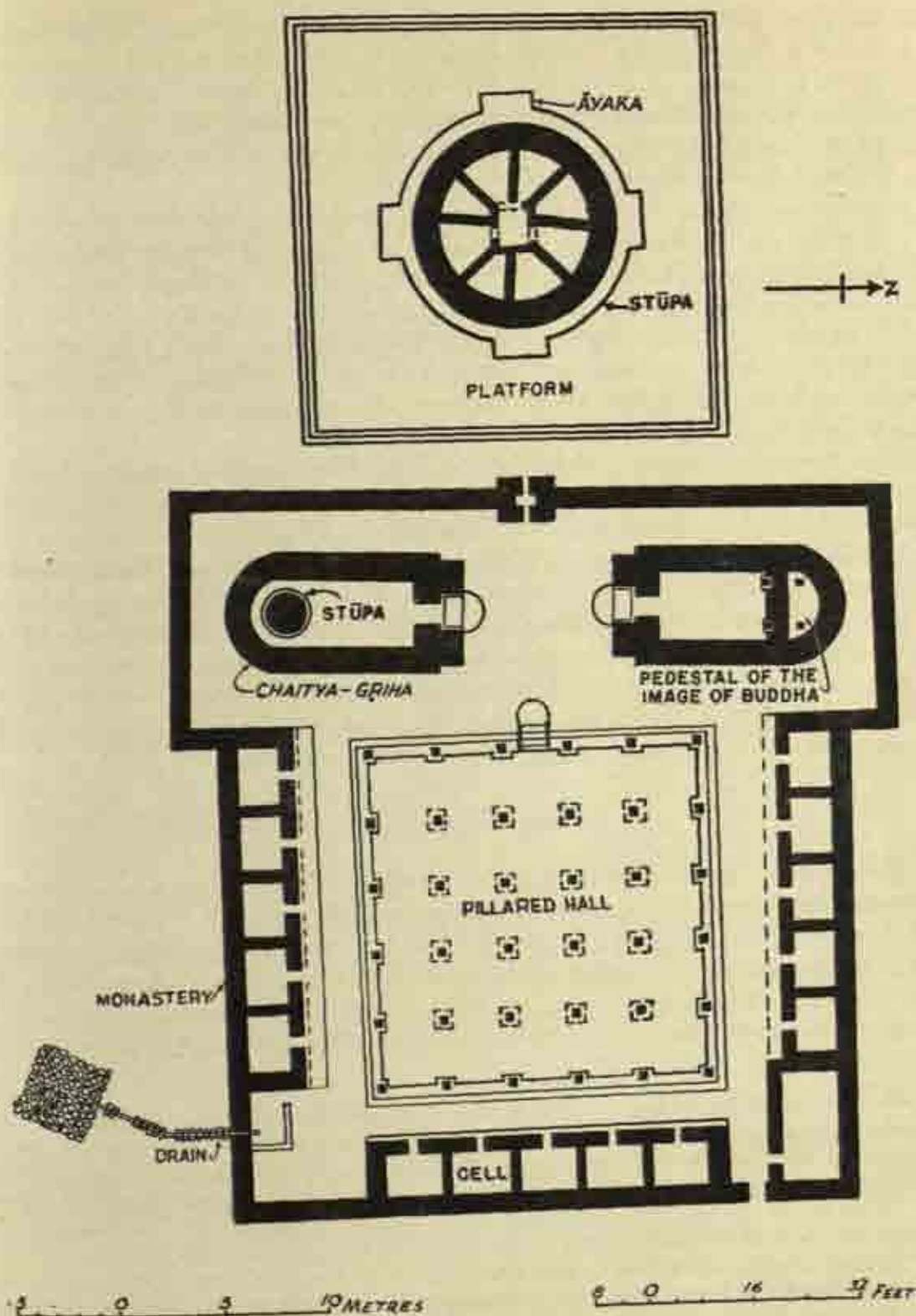


FIG. 13. Nagarjunakonda: plan of a typical manastic complex



Concurrently with the elaboration and elongation of the drum, the umbrellas, superimposed one above the other, increased in number and often assumed the appearance of a tall conical spire made of a series of gradually-diminishing discs, sometimes crowned by a single umbrella and often tapering to a conical point (photo 42).

The top of the *harmikā* expanded in most cases into the shape of an inverted pyramid, its façades often relieved with offsets and recessed angles.

A platform, absent in earlier examples, was gradually introduced to serve as a pedestal for the drum, when the latter formed a part and parcel of the *stūpa* proper. Initially circular or square, it was elaborated, as time passed, into variegated shapes, as at Ratnagiri, with the addition of one or multiple projections on each face of a square (photo 40). Gradually it became higher, sometimes built in diminishing terraces as the terraced *stūpa*<sup>16</sup> (photo 48) at Lauriya-Nandangarh (p. 85), and often decorated with conspicuous mouldings or sunken panels between pilasters as in Andhra or sculptures within niches separated by pilasters as in Gandhāra (photo 36).

The low hemisphere of the earliest *stūpas* was, thus, in course of evolution conventionalized into a tall, very often ornamental, tower<sup>17</sup> with emphasis on the platform, drum and *chhatravali*. Indeed, the transformation was so radical in the later stage (photo 44) that it is difficult to recognize the original form (photos 37 and 97) and its significance without a knowledge of the intermediate stages (photos 41 and 38). The changing character and the broad stages in its development can be studied from stone (photo 40) and metal miniatures (photos 42 and 43) and rock-cut specimens; for not a single structural *stūpa* of importance of the later period has been preserved up to its complete superstructure. Fortunately, a few Burmese specimens, no doubt modelled after the Indian ones, are sufficiently well preserved to give a complete picture of the *stūpa* in its latest phase.

## B. THE MONASTERY

Being wandering (*parivrājaka*) monks, the members of the *Saṅgha* had at first no fixed habitat. They 'stayed here and there: in a forest, at the root of a tree, on a hillside, in a glen, in a mountain cave, in a cemetery, in a forest glade, in the open air, on a heap of straw'.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, they had to find out some temporary shelter, whether in caves, or under trees or in sanctuaries, during the three months of the rainy season, which were unsuitable for wandering, and when they were required to observe *varshā* by taking

<sup>16</sup> A terraced edifice, whether a temple or a *stūpa*, may be defined as one rising in tiers, with a common block in the centre, in a way that the area of the edifice diminishes with each ascending terrace, the top of each lower terrace being often used as the *pradakṣiṇa-patha* of the next upper one. In the case of a terraced temple, the shrine containing the object of worship should be located on the topmost terrace. In a way, Stūpa 1 at Sanchi should be regarded as a terraced structure in that it has an upper processional path; but it is not so regarded probably for the reason that the number of terraces there is not more than one.

<sup>17</sup> The *stūpa* has assumed such a form as early as the seventh century A.D., as Hiuen Tsang sometimes used such terms in describing several *stūpas*. We have instances of tall cylindrical *stūpas* even in the Gupta period (e.g. Dhāmekh Stūpa at Sarnath, photo 66).

<sup>18</sup> *Cullavagga*, tr. I. B. Horner, *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, XX (London, 1952), p. 204.



a fixed abode (*āvāsa*) and by depending for alms on the householders around the *āvāsa*. This state of affairs took a better turn even during the lifetime of Buddha. On one occasion, Buddha, not being an advocate of extreme asceticism, accepted the offer of sixty dwelling places at Rājagṛīha offered by a local merchant for the use of the *Saṅgha* of the four directions (i.e. community as a whole). Thus came into being monastic abodes where the *bhikṣhus* could meditate at peace during their rainy retreats and perform the communal ceremonies.

These and other similar early dwelling-houses were merely thatched bamboo huts or simple wooden constructions, not different from secular cottages. But very soon came into existence sumptuous monasteries (denoted by such terms as *vihāras*, *ārāmas* and *saṅghārāmas*, i.e. resting-places of the *Saṅgha*), there being no dearth of rich lay devotees eager to attain merit by building structures provided with all the amenities required in monastic life. One of the earliest of such monasteries was built at Śrāvastī by the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika (p. 4) who 'caused the *Gandha Kūṭi* to be made for Buddha in the centre, and around it and according to a set plan, he caused to be constructed (cellular) abodes for the eighty great disciples, each sufficient for one man, and to be provided (for all) one-pinnacled, two-pinnacled, duck-and-partridge roofed, long-chambered and maṇḍapa-like retreats and tanks as well as "places to walk, to retire during the night, and to stay during the day".<sup>19</sup> The entire monastic complex, if the Pālī text can be relied upon as depicting the condition in Buddha's time, consisted of *vihāras* (dwelling-rooms), *pariveṇas* (cells or private chambers), *koṭṭhakas* (gate-chambers or porches), *upaṭṭhāna-sālās* (service-halls), *aggi-sālās* (halls with fireplaces), *kappiya-kūṭis* (store-house outside the *vihāra*), *vachcha-kūṭis* (privies), *chaṅkamas* (promenade), *chaṅkama-sālās* (rooms with promenade), *udapānas* (wells), *udapāna-sālās* (sheds attached to wells), *jantā-ghara* (bath-rooms), *jantā-ghara-sālās* (halls attached to bath-rooms), *pokkharayā* (tanks) and *maṇḍapas* (halls).<sup>20</sup>

The solicitous donor paid considerable attention to the selection of the site, as evinced by the following stock question found in the texts whenever anyone thought of donating a dwelling-place to the Master, be it a grove or a monastery: 'Now where could the Lord stay that would be neither too far from a village (or town), nor too near, suitable for coming and going, accessible to people whenever they want, not crowded by day, having little noise at night, little sound, without folks' breadth, secluded from people, fitting for meditation?'<sup>21</sup>

The choice invariably fell on a site which fulfilled the two conditions required for an ideal monastic life, namely, proximity to a habitation where the monks could go on their begging rounds and at the same time seclusion ensuring a proper atmosphere for meditation. To secure such a site, Anāthapiṇḍika paid a fabulous price to Prince Jeta for the latter's grove situated in the outskirts of the capital-city of Śrāvastī (p. 4).

<sup>19</sup> B. C. Law, *Śrāvastī in Indian Literature*, Mem. Arch. Surv. Ind., no. 50 (Delhi, 1935), p. 24.

<sup>20</sup> *Cullavagga*, p. 223. Evidently, the description applies to the one prevailing at the time of the composition. A relief (photo 13) from Bharhut shows isolated structures with domical and gabled (or barrel-vaulted) roofs as in huts. A relief from Sanchi, also depicting Jetavana, presents three abodes of Buddha—a circular hut with a domical roof having a finial at the crown and two elliptical structures with a row of finials at the ridge.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222.



The Buddhist remains of almost all important establishments were found slightly away from towns. It is thus that outside the populous city of Vidiśā (modern Besnagar adjoining Vidisha) there sprang up the magnificent establishment of Sanchi (p. 96), besides a host of lesser ones at Sonari, Satdhara, Bhojpur and Andher (p. 91).<sup>22</sup> Similarly, the Dharma-chakra-vihāra of Sarnath was established 4 miles north of Vārāṇasī.

Besides the Anāthapiṇḍikārāma, the other important monasteries that came into existence during Buddha's lifetime were the Pūrvārāma (pp. 5 and 76), a double-storeyed *pāsāda* of brick and stone with five hundred rooms on each floor (an obvious exaggeration), erected by Viśākhā (p. 5) and Rājākārāma (p. 76) in the neighbourhood of Śrāvastī, the Ghoshitārāma (pp. 5 and 82) and Kukkuṭārāma (p. 82) at Kauśāmbī, the Kālākārāma donated by the banker Kālaka at Sāketa and the *vihāras* attached to Venuvana, Jivakāmravana and Maddakuchchi-Migadāya in the suburbs of Rājagriha (p. 71).

Rules were laid down about the size of the rooms, lest monasteries would lapse into luxurious dwellings. The ownership of the monasteries along with the equipments vested in the *Saṅgha* of all quarters in the beginning, but later on a sectarian spirit apparently made itself felt when different monasteries were allotted to different sects. Even in the same locality (e.g. Nagarjunakonda, p. 206), monks of different sects lived in seclusion in their separate self-contained units.

In addition to serving the purpose for which they were originally designed, the monasteries, particularly the important ones, developed in the course of time into highly organized educational institutions and academic centres of Buddhist learning when they attracted teachers and students from far and near. Such were the monasteries of Nālandā, Uddandapura (Odantapuri), Vikramaśīlā, Somapura, Ratnagiri, Jagaddala and many others. This development, somewhat like our modern residential universities, took place in post-Christian centuries, evidently in response to the increasing demands of the Mahāyānist life and teachings and growth of literature. In these monasteries the resident monks were provided with every facility for prosecuting higher studies. The expenses for their necessities were defrayed either from the revenue of lands granted by rulers or lavish donations received from the laity of means.

The earliest monasteries, some of which were, no doubt, made of perishable materials like wood and bamboo, have either mostly perished or been renovated to such an extent in later periods that it is now difficult to identify their original nucleus. None of the structural examples of the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era is completely intact. Luckily, however, the well-preserved rock-cut caves of the Deccan furnish a continuous evolution of the rock-cut monastic architecture from the third-second century B.C. onwards. It should be borne in mind that rock-cut monasteries (or temples, for a matter of that) are not constructions and, hence, not architecture in the proper sense of the term. The problem faced by the architects was more one of sculpture than architecture.

In the earliest rock-cut examples the cells, either single or in groups, were arrayed irregularly without any scheme or co-ordination. By the second century B.C., to which

<sup>22</sup> A. Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes* (London, 1854), pp. 309-50.



period can be ascribed Caves 12 (photo 45), 13 and 15 A (fig. 4) of Ajanta (p. 175), the standard plan with minor variations was well-nigh established. This plan consisted of a walled hall flanked by small cells on three sides. The front wall of the hall, sometimes decorated with reliefs, was pierced with a door having wooden leaves. The small cells, often provided with rock-cut platforms to serve as beds with one of the ends raised for the purpose of a pillow, served only as dormitories. Meant for congregation, the hall was generally square

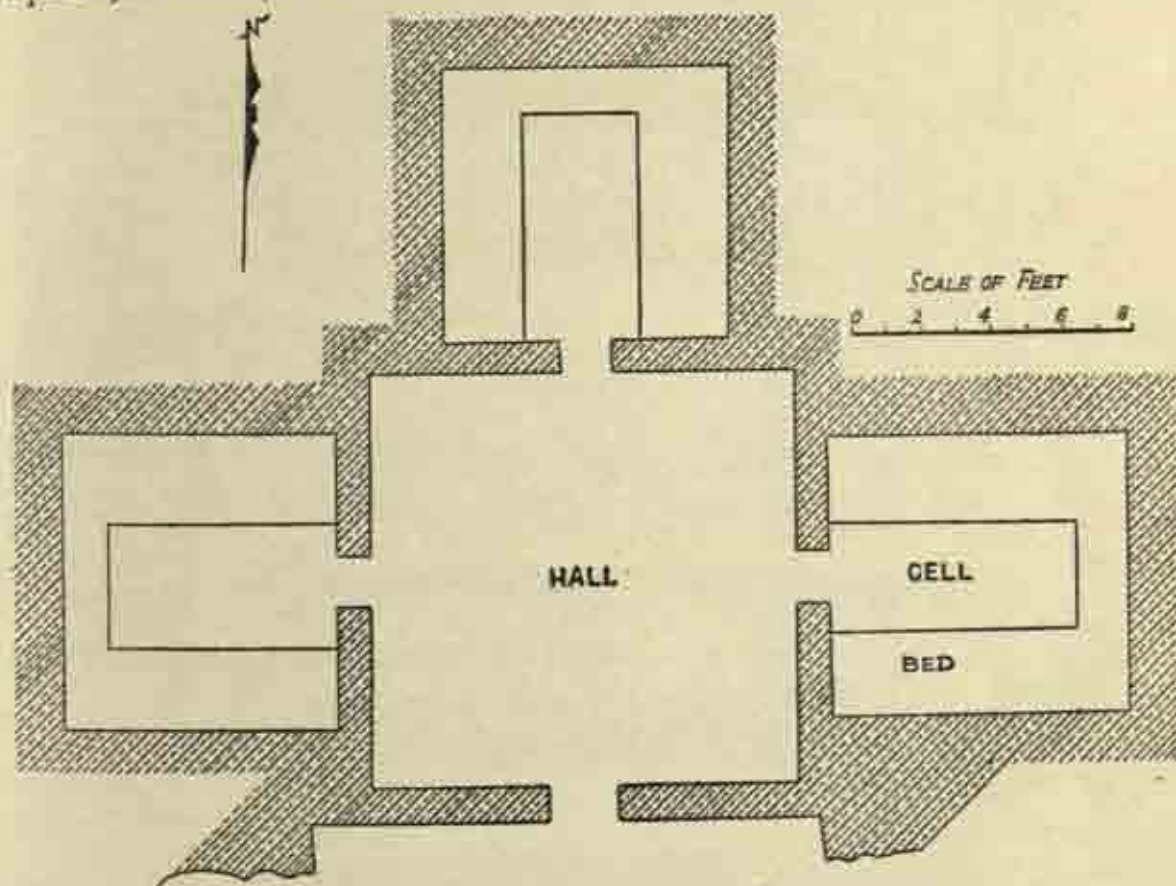


FIG. 4. Ajanta : Cave 15A, plan

or oblong on plan, but was in rare instances, as at Bedsa, apsidal (fig. 5; photo 46; p. 154). The halls were frequently astylar, but at least in two pre-Christian *vihāras*, one at Kondane (p. 162) and the other at Pitalkhora (p. 173), pillars were introduced. In some caves a further development is noticed in the addition of a pillared verandah, of which highly ornamental examples are provided by three caves (fig. 6; photo 109) of the second century A.D. at Nasik (pp. 170 f.) and by Gaṇeśa-leṇa (photo 103) at Junnar (p. 160), the earliest being the one at Kondane.

Attempts at improvement went on till the plan found a harmonious expression combining grace with utility. Rock-cut monasteries (fig. 7) of the fifth century A.D. at Ajanta (p. 176) consisted of a pillared hall with cells on three sides, the central cell on the back side opposite the doorway converted into a spacious shrine-chamber (often projected backward beyond the alignment of the cells and sometimes preceded by a



porch or antechamber)—the *vihāra*, thus, serving the dual purpose of monastic dwelling and sanctuary. In some cases subsidiary shrines were scooped out not only on the back of the hall but also on the two sides. The façades of the verandah and porch and the

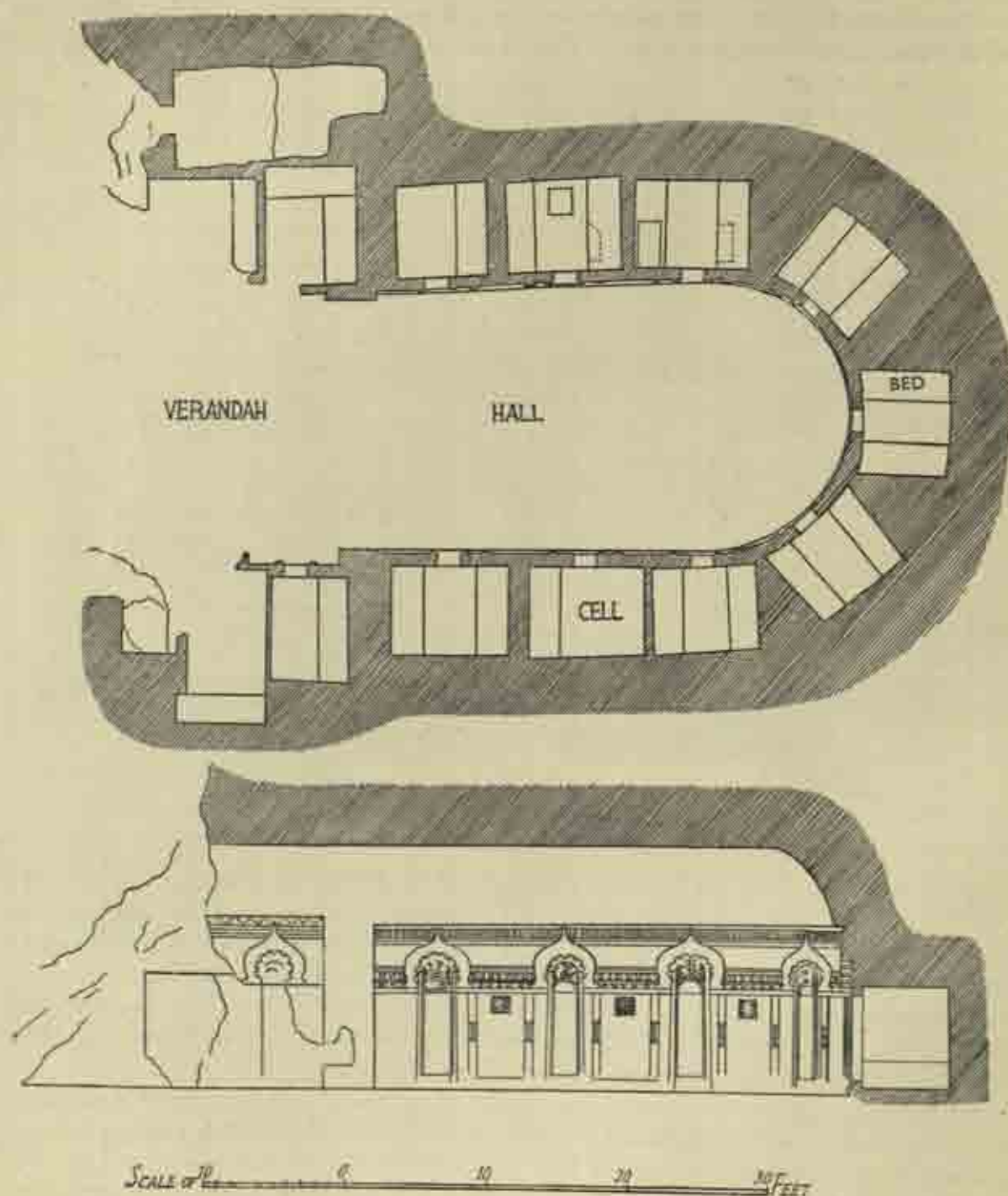


FIG. 5. Bedsa : rock-cut apsidal monastery, section and plan.

pillars were decorated with carvings of exquisite workmanship, while the walls and ceilings of the verandah, hall, antechamber and shrine were sometimes embellished with paintings (photos 12 and 113). Even after the evolution of this standard plan, there are instances of departures, some having a few singular features (figs. 18 and 19). At Junnar there exist independent refectories (p. 157) which as well as the common kitchen and the like were not necessary in the early days when monks and nuns individually used to beg their food in the villages and towns.

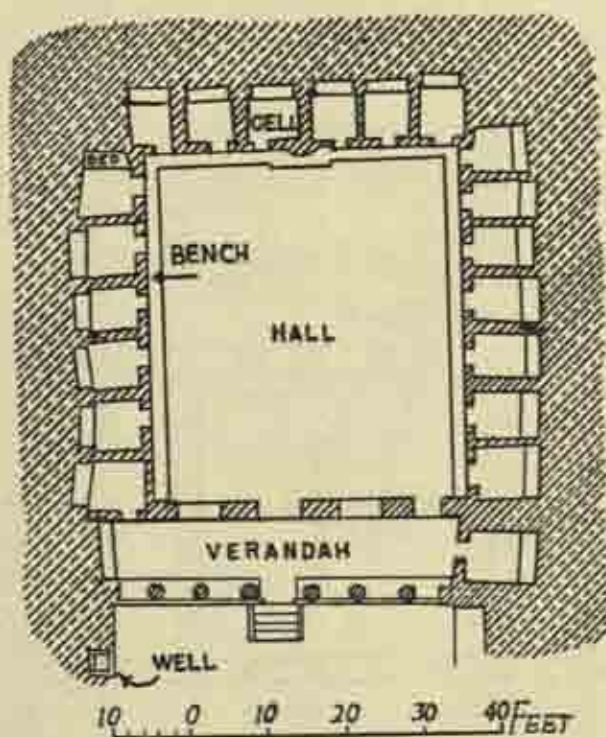


FIG. 6. Nasik : Cave 3, plan

Some of the extant rock-cut monasteries consist of more than one storey. Cave 6 of Ajanta is double-storeyed, while Caves 11 (p. 186) and 12 (pp. 186-88) of Ellora are three-storeyed.

Available remains of the structural ones show the same course of development, there being no essential difference between them and the rock-cut monasteries. Indeed, the latter can be regarded as mere translations of the former in live rock so that all features characteristic of the former were painstakingly copied in the latter even if they were redundant (e.g. use of vaulted ceilings, representation of beams and rafters, etc.) and inappropriate (e.g. sloping doors); the conservative emulation of the interior feature of a free-standing quadrangular monastery had, in fact, an extremely adverse effect on lighting and ventilation of rock-cut monasteries, as the central hall could not be made open to the sky (without large-scale quarrying) like the courtyard of a structural quadrangular monastery, while the windows provided in the front wall of the hall were not sufficient



for the purpose, so that the cells of quadrangular rock-cut monasteries were dark and almost unfit for habitation. This may partly account for preponderance of small units with one or two rock-cut cells and a verandah in some sites even in later times.

The earliest structural monasteries must have been mostly flimsy structures with no set plan. If the rubble-built building complex unearthed at the site commonly identified with that of Jivakāmravana of Rajgir (p. 73) pertains to a monastery, the latter represents

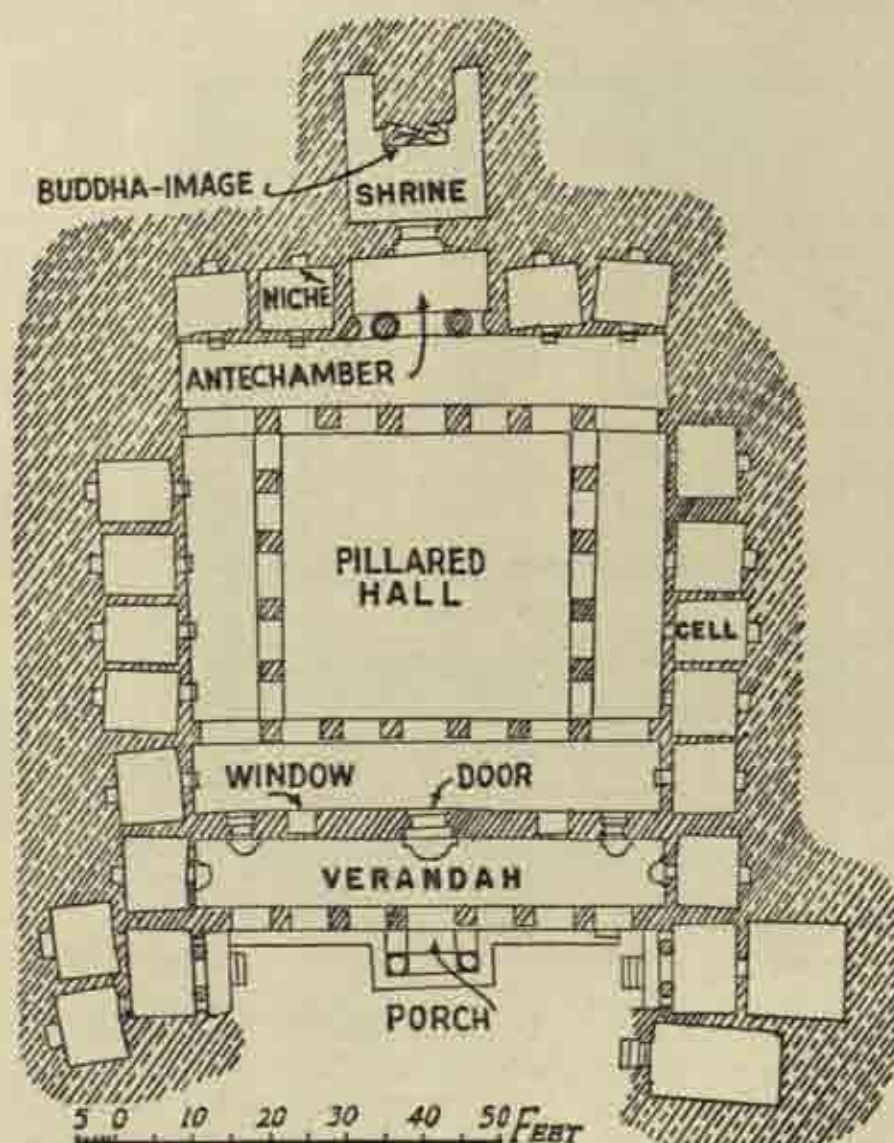


FIG. 7. Ajanta : Cave 1, plan

one of the earliest monasteries of India dating probably from Buddha's time. Although reduced to foundation, the complex (fig. 8) is interesting, as it includes among other structures, mostly oblong, four long and somewhat elliptical halls with their two longer sides straight and shorter sides semicircular. Three of the halls have openings, presumably

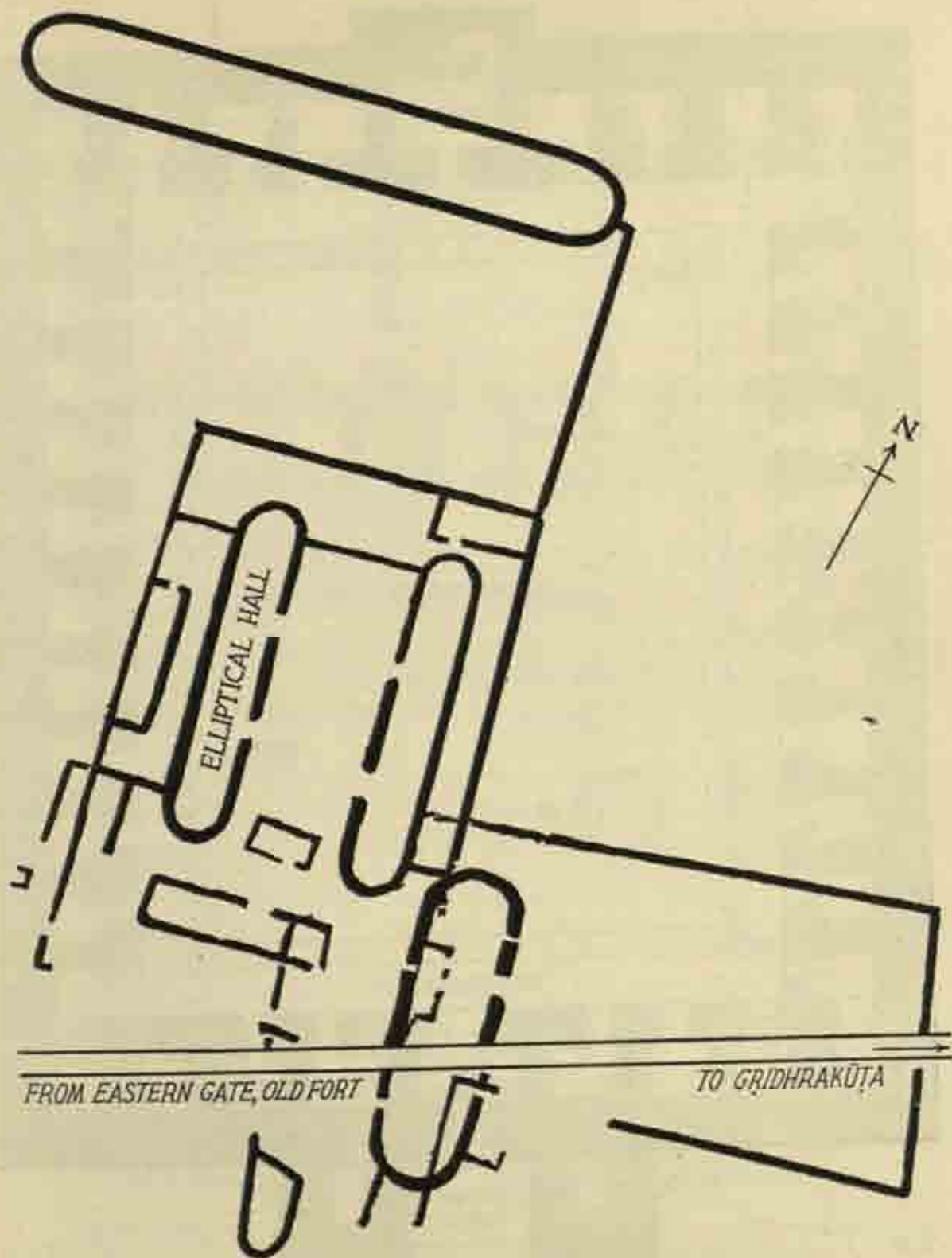


FIG. 8. Rajgir : Jivakāmravana complex, plan.



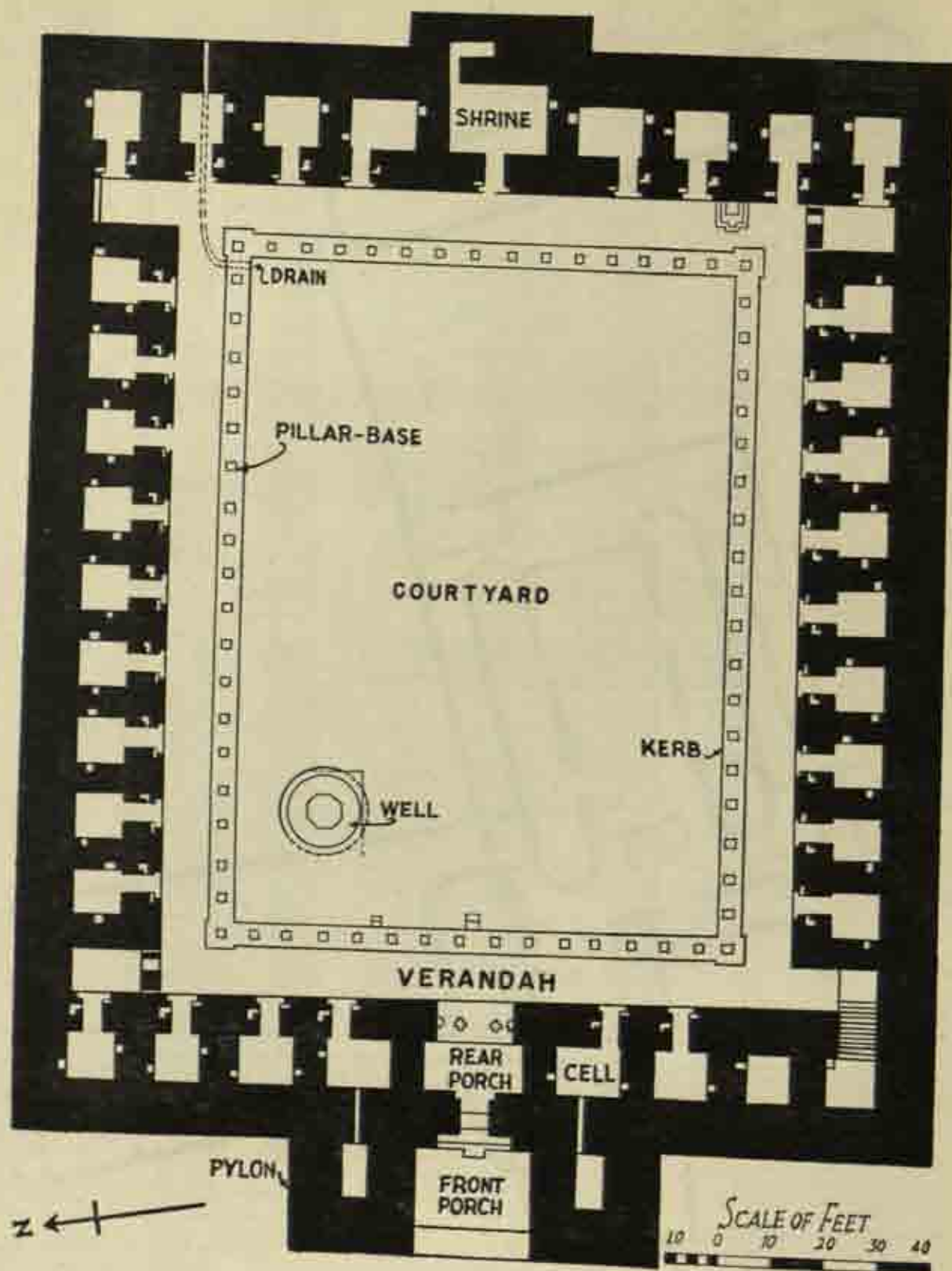


FIG. 9. Nālandā: Monastery 8, plan

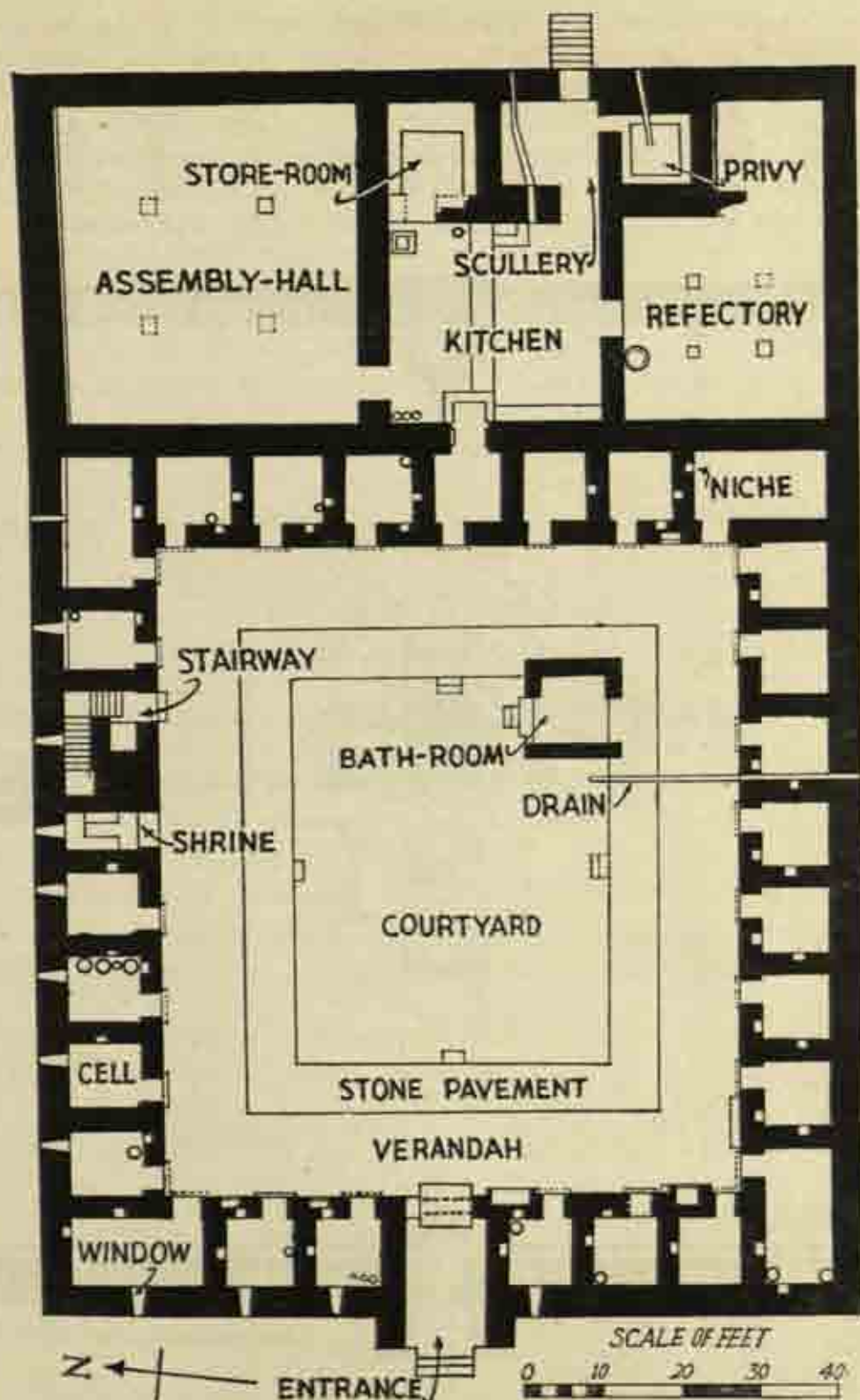


FIG. 10. Jaulian : monastery, plan



for doorways, in their longer sides. The halls were probably meant for communal living. An idea of the elevation of such structures may be had from two of the three favourite residences of Buddha represented in a scene of Jetavana on a relief of the northern gateway of Sanchi.

In later period came into vogue well-protected self-sufficient monasteries of two or more storeys enclosed by high walls with no openings except the entrance. These monasteries were quadrilateral on plan, with living-rooms flanking the central

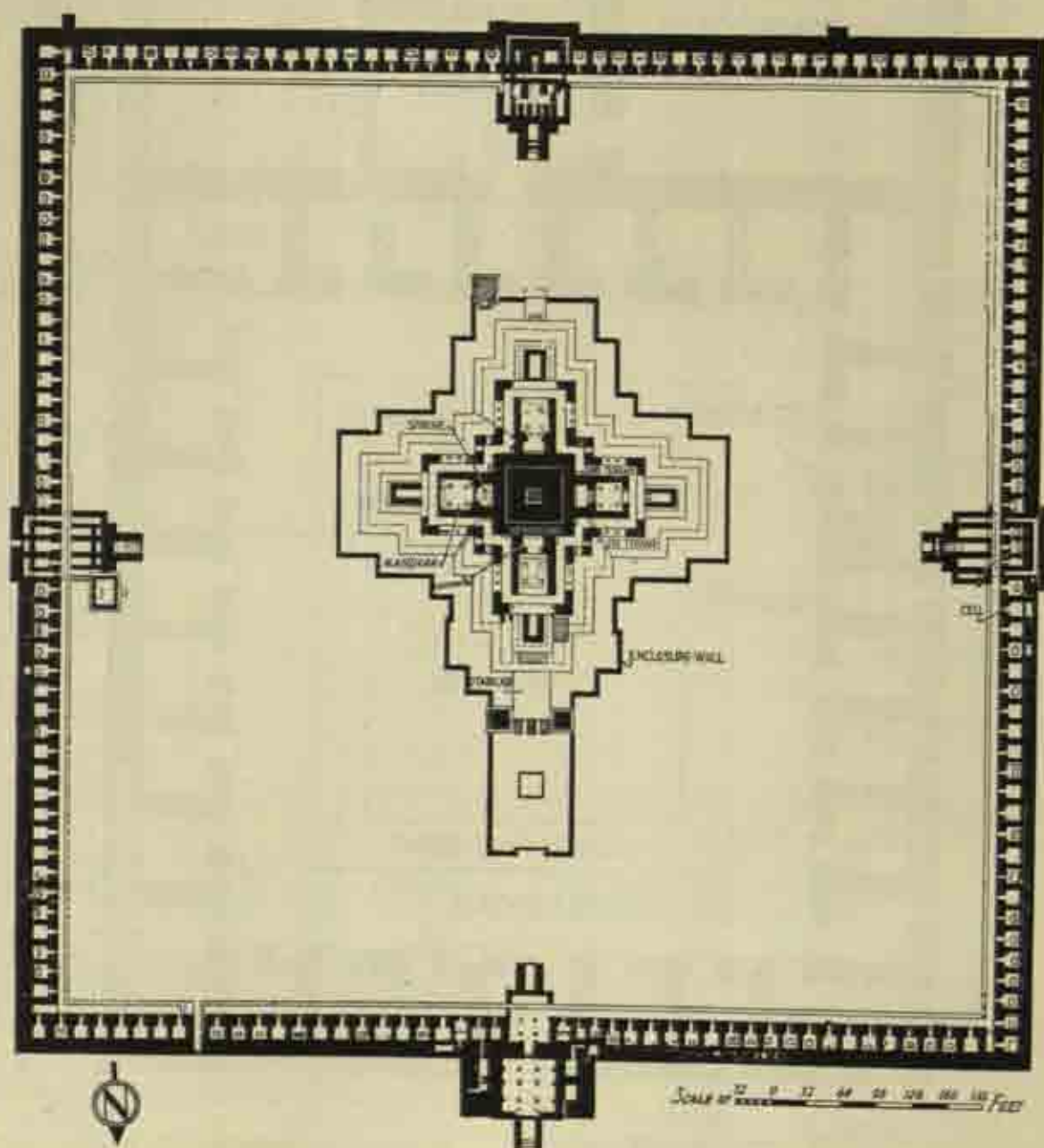


FIG. 11. Paharpur: Somapura-mahāvihāra, plan

courtyard (fig. 9; photo 49). In fact, the plan itself was derived from private houses consisting of huts or rooms arranged on four cardinal sides of an inner quadrangle (*angana*), this kind of planning being quite common in villages of Bengal even now. The open courtyard had sometimes a central *mandapa* resting on pillars (fig. 3; photo 47). Around it was almost invariably a running verandah with pillars resting on a raised plinth, beyond which on all the four sides<sup>23</sup> was a row of cells, their posterior walls being identical with the peripheral walls of the monastery. One of the cells, not unoften the one facing the gate in front, was the shrine, containing a *stūpa* in the earlier ones, as at Taxila, or an image for the private worship of the resident monks, and another would often contain the staircase to reach the upper storey. The staircase was sometimes lighted by skylights as at Nālandā (p. 87). Attached to each monastery were, besides the assembly-hall, a refectory, kitchen, store-room, washing-place, etc. These adjuncts were sometimes outside the main-complex, but they were connected with it by a door (fig. 10). To take out water from the courtyard, covered drains were provided under the verandah and one of the cells. On either side of the entrance of a fully-developed monastery were introduced two projecting pylon-like structures (fig. 9). Such quadrangular monasteries were eminently suitable to the needs of the congregation, as they afforded the inmates privacy and seclusion, protected them against the sun and rain and, at the same time, with their open courtyard, admitted ample light and air.

The later monasteries were not essentially different on plan from this, though in still later periods there was a progressive attempt towards elaboration and ornamentation of the shrine into a full-fledged temple. Sometimes, the sanctuary occupied an independent position in the centre of the open courtyard, as at Mainamati (p. 245) and the Somapura-mahāvihāra (fig. 11) at Paharpur, the latter being the biggest of its kind in India, measuring 822 ft. square.

### C. THE *chaitya-griha*

The commonly-called *chaitya*-hall, known often as *chetiya-ghara* (Sanskrit *chaitya-griha*) and *thūpa-ghara* and rarely as *gaha-thuva* (*griha-stūpa*) in inscriptions, was in reality a sanctuary, the object of worship in this case being a *chaitya* (i.e. *stūpa*). Evidently, it arose from the idea of providing a convenient shelter to the devotee, where he might perform his worship without being handicapped by weather. Otherwise, the simultaneous constructions of an open-air *stūpa* and a *chaitya-griha* at one and the same site remain unexplained. Thus, exigency, both utilitarian and ritualistic, lay at the root of this particular form of architecture.

The *chaitya-grihas* may be broadly classified into three kinds according to the nature of their ground-plans, namely, (i) circular, (ii) apsidal and (iii) quadrilateral. Sanctuaries with apsidal ground-plans are fairly widespread, being found as far north as Harwan (p. 111) and as far south as Brahmagiri (District Chitaldrug, Mysore). They consist of an apse housing a *stūpa* and a nave for congregation with or without a partition-wall in

<sup>23</sup> At Nagarjunakonda apsidal sanctuaries, either single or double, were often found on the fourth side—the side facing the *stūpa* (fig. 3; photo 47).



between. Often these two components are surrounded by aisles or an ambulatory passage. The apse is generally semicircular and exceptionally octagonal as in Temple 1<sub>3</sub> (about the close of the first century A.D.) of the Dharmarājikā complex of Taxila.<sup>24</sup> The accentuated apse of Cave 13 of Pitalkhora is more than a semicircle. In some oblong *chaitya-grihas* (e.g. Cave 9 of Ajanta and Cave 4 of Aurangabad) the apse is made semicircular with the help of pillars which demarcate the aisles from the apse and nave. The quadrilateral *chaitya-grihas* are usually astylar. Their largest concentration is in western India at places like Junnar (p. 158), Kuda, Karadh, Sailawadi, Mahad, etc., though the type is encountered in central and northern India at places like Dhamnar (p. 105) and Taxila (p. 126).

The form that was initially adopted was dictated by the ritual needs of the worshipper. The circular plan and domical contour of the *stūpa*, the object of worship, together with the ritual of circumambulation, prompted the original builders to select a particular type with a circular plan and a domical roof having a finial at the crown out of the prevalent types of huts which are represented in early reliefs of Bharhut, Sanchi (photo 10), Amaravati, etc. Cottages with a circular ground-plan and a conical or hemispherical roof even now survive in some regions among a few castes and tribes.<sup>25</sup>

The remnant of one of the earliest such structures has been excavated on the hill, known as Bijak-ki-pahāḍī, at Bairat<sup>26</sup> (52 miles from Jaipur). It is ascribed to Aśoka not only for the fragments of one or more Aśokan pillars of the Chunar sandstone and of a polished stone umbrella of the Mauryan workmanship, found near the building, but also for inscribed bricks. The circular structure (fig. 12) was internally 27 ft. 2 in. in diameter, with its wall made of panels of wedge-shaped brickwork<sup>27</sup> alternating with octagonal wooden pillars, possibly twenty-seven in number. Around it was a circular processional path (7 ft. 3 in. wide) enclosed by an outer wall, also circular, with a wide entrance on the east, just in front of the porticoed entrance of the central chamber. The structure had around it at a later date an oblong wall, its eastern portion serving as the congregation-hall. The superstructure of the sanctuary, which was probably like the one on photo 4, was missing; according to the excavator, the roof was covered with tiles with a pottery finial at the crown. The sloping roof of the circumambulatory passage rested partly on the outer wall and partly on the architrave over the pillars of the sanctuary.

A near copy of this, though of a later date, is the rock-cut *chaitya-griha* (fig. 13;

<sup>24</sup> Kalawan (Taxila) presents a divergent type in Shrine A<sub>4</sub> (latter part of the first century A.D.) which consists of an octagonal cella and a squarish antechamber connected by a passage; cf. J. Marshall, *Taxila*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 326 and 327.

<sup>25</sup> *Peasant Life of India*, Memoir of the Anthropological Survey of India, no. 8 (Calcutta, 1961), pp. 13 and 14.

<sup>26</sup> D. R. Sahni, *Archaeological Remains and Excavations at Bairat* (Jaipur State, 1937), pp. 28ff. The Buddhist establishment at Bairat with its nucleus going back to the period of Aśoka continued to exist for about four centuries on two different terraces of the Bijak-ki-pahāḍī, the upper containing a brick monastery and the lower the circular sanctuary. Of the two Aśokan edicts found at Bairat, one is a copy of the Minor Rock-Edict noticed in several other places; but the other is of unique importance, since here Aśoka prescribes for study certain passages from Buddhist texts.

<sup>27</sup> Possibly this was a later addition. It is very likely that the pillars originally stood free with interspaces kept open; cf. Stuart Piggott, 'The Earliest Buddhist Shrines', *Antiquity*, XVII, no. 65 (March 1943), pp. 2-6.

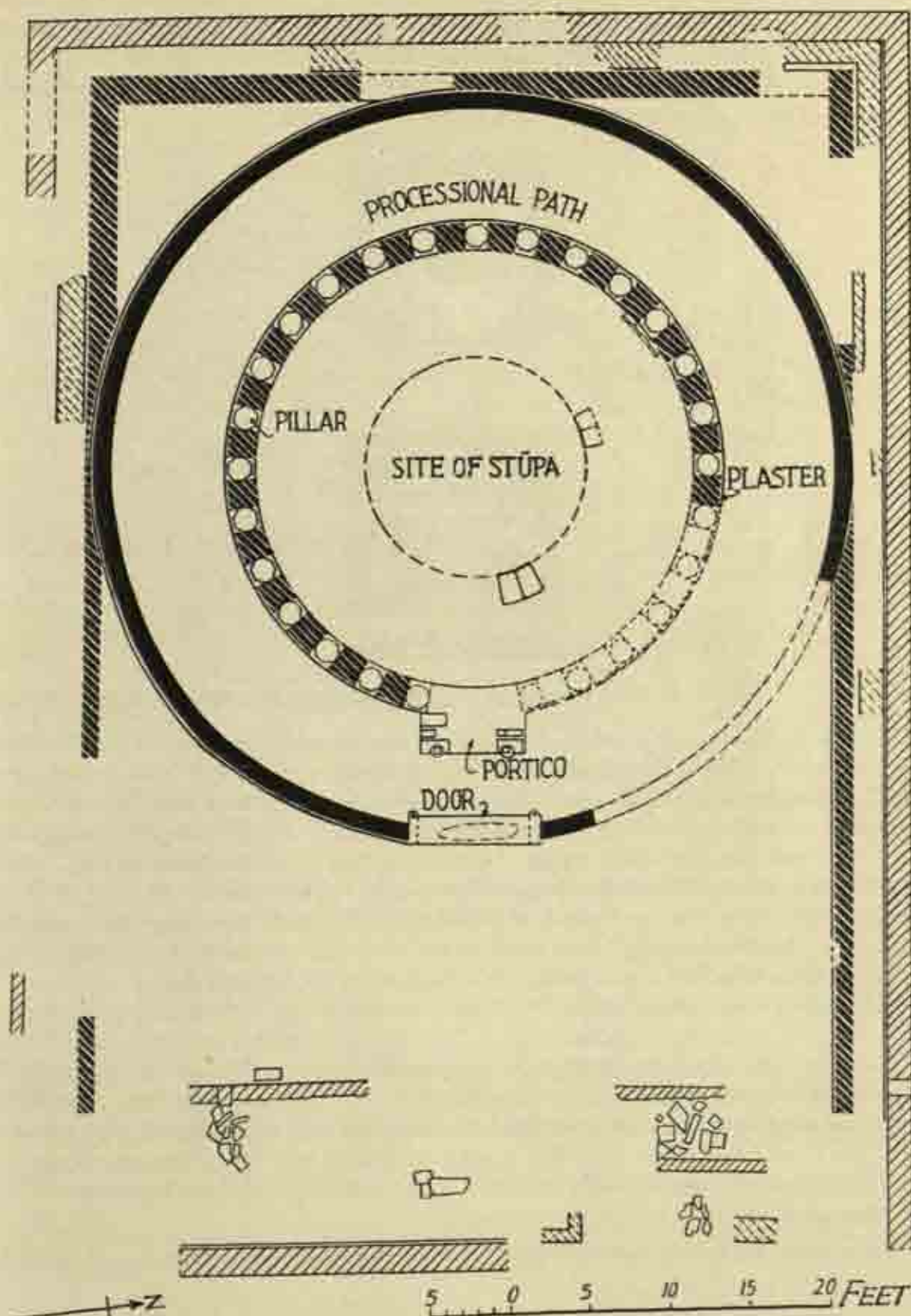
FIG. 12. Bairat: circular *chaitya-griha*, plan



photo 52) of the Tuljā-leṇa group (p. 157) at Junnar where, however, the strips of walls connecting octagonal pillars, twelve in number, encircling the *stūpa* are not reproduced. The ceiling of the central portion above the pillars is domical, while that of the circular aisle is a half arch (simulating caves) at a much lower height.<sup>28</sup>

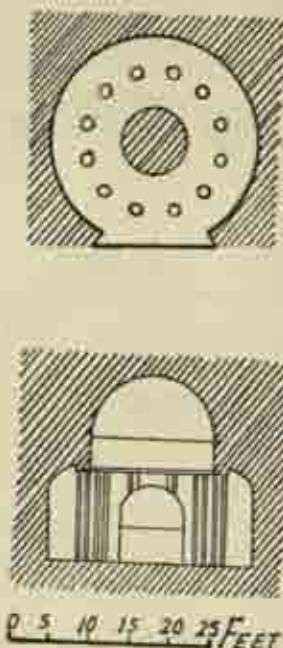


FIG. 13. Junnar : rock-cut circular *chaitya-griha*, section and plan

Situated widely apart are two more rock-cut specimens of this type—one at Kondivte (p. 163) and the other at Guntupalli (p. 218). The former (photo 105) is an astylar circular cell, with a domical ceiling, containing a *stūpa* and preceded by a long flat-roofed congregation-hall with an opening communicating the two. It provides the nearest approach to the Sudāmā cave, dedicated to the Ājīvikaś by Aśoka, in the Barabar hills, where, however, the ceilings of both the chambers are vaulted. The circular cell with projected eaves is lighted by two perforated *jālī*-windows. The hall, now open in front, had originally a wooden frontage; chases and sockets for it exist in the floor and the ceiling. The inner side of the hall is concentric with the front of the circular shrine.

The pillarless specimen (photo 134) from Guntupalli has a circular plan, a domical ceiling braced, unlike the one at Kondivte, with a network of rock-cut latitudinal and longitudinal rafters (fig. 14) in imitation of the framework of wood or bamboo necessary for the construction of a domed hut, and overhanging eaves with an extremely narrow verandah or porch in the front. The latter contains a spacious doorway, over which is the representation of a horseshoe-shaped arch. It is so archaic-looking that one is tempted to regard it as the archetype and assign a high antiquity to it. But in the absence of any other data it is difficult to attribute to it a very early date.

<sup>28</sup> The Ceylonese *ratadāge* (*vattē-dhātu-gāra*, 'circular relic-house') is the elaboration of this archaic type.

At Guntupalli itself there exists the remnant of a structural *chaitya-griha* (fig. 15; photo 133) of this type, while at Salihundam (p. 222) there are structural remains of two more with their moulded bases (photo 137). These structural specimens have each a

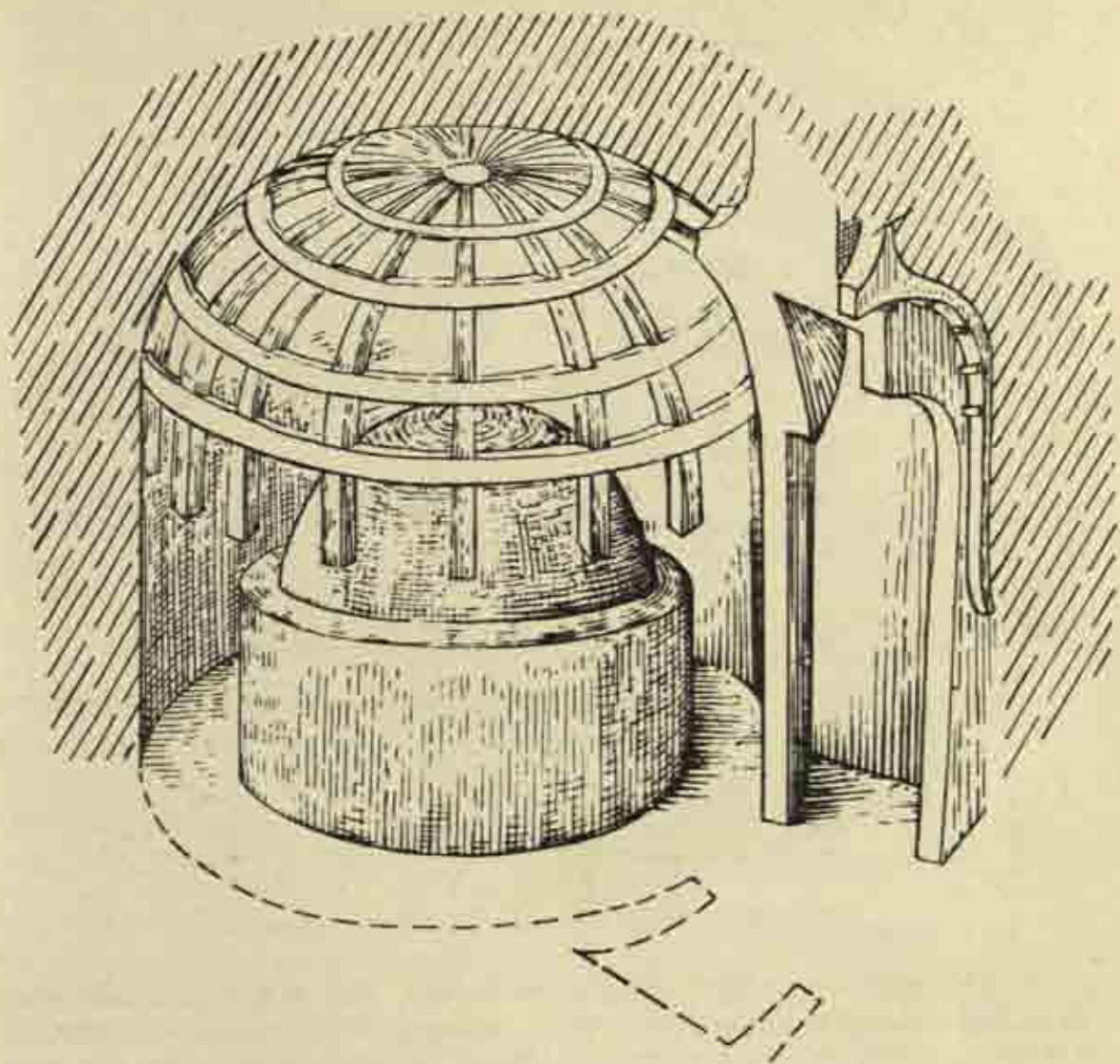


FIG. 14. Guntupalli : rock-cut circular *chaitya-griha*, section

projection for a passage or porch. It is interesting to note here that the circular form was utilized at Nagarjunakonda in the case of independent structural cells within a few monastic establishments of the third-fourth century A.D.

The most popular form, which very soon became the norm, was, however, apsidal.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Huts with an apsidal ground-plan are now prevalent among the Telugu-speaking Kaura caste and some section of the Telugu-speaking nomadic settlement in Mysore (cf. *Peasant Life of India*, pp. 14 and 15).



Presumably, it developed out of a circular cella preceded by an oblong hall, both being eventually combined by the removal of the partition-wall. The emergence of this form may be traced as early as the Maurya age in the nucleus of Temple 40 (p. 98) at Sanchi. Built on a high rectangular masonry plinth approached by two flights of steps, one each on the

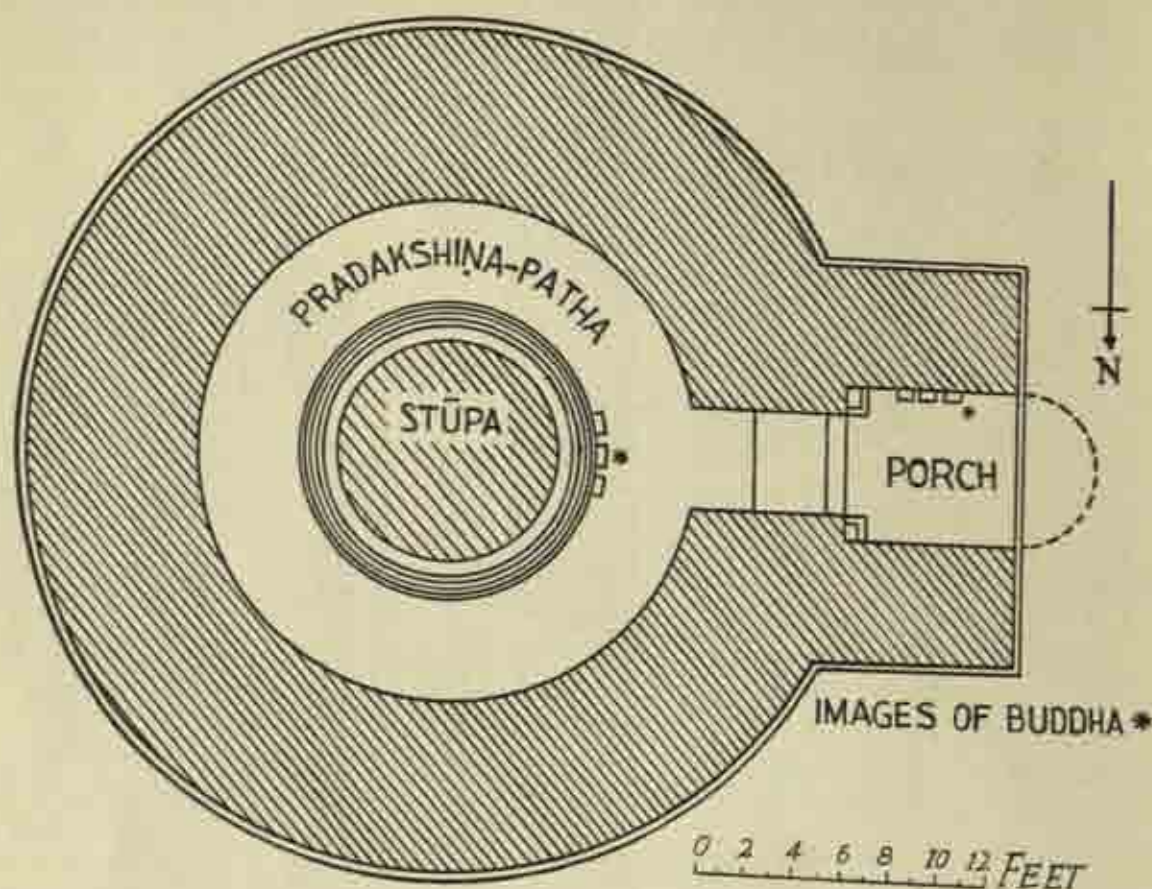


FIG. 15. Guntupalli : structural *chaitya-griha*, plan

longer sides, the superstructure of this temple was mainly of timber. Nothing of it except the stone foundation of an apsidal inner wall, concentric with the outer wall, internally apsidal and externally oblong, has come down to us; the whole thing seems to have gone up in flames, and over the plinth cropped up a pillared hall in as early as the Śuṅga period. Equally ruined is the apsidal building found to the west of the Aśokan pillar at Sarnath (p. 67). Ascribed to the late Maurya period, this brick structure too is reduced to its lowest part. There are no indications of the existence of pillars within.

In the apsidal masonry temple (about the beginning of the first century A.D.) of Sirkap<sup>30</sup> (pp. 124 and 125), the partition-wall between the circular cella and the oblong hall is retained as in the Kondivte specimen (p. 44), but the wall here is curved only internally as in the structural *chaitya-griha* of Harwan (p. 111) and an ambulatory passage, reached

<sup>30</sup> J. Marshall, *Taxila*, I (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 150 ff.



through an additional front porch, runs continuously round the outside of the hall and the cella; the outer wall around the passage most probably was pierced with windows. It stands to a maximum height of 6 ft. 6 in. above the level of the surrounding court.

Buildings of this type, whether structural or rock-cut, are an almost invariable feature of the monastic establishments of Andhra Pradesh and the Deccan. The structural ones are mostly found concentrated in south-eastern India, the largest assemblage being at Nagarjunakonda (p. 209). They form a homogeneous group without evincing any significant deviation. Often built on a platform, either apsidal or oblong, they present a single hall with the side opposite the entrance semicircular. Save for a few broad mouldings in the exterior base and re-entrant angles at the corners of the front side, the walls are plain and covered with plaster. The floors are either paved with stone or brick or of concrete of rammed brick-grits. Towards the apse-end is the votive *stūpa*. Such was the popularity of the form in this area that even when the image of Buddha was introduced, the plan remained unchanged for some time. Often we find juxtaposed two such structures (fig. 3; photo 47), one containing an image of Buddha and the other a *stūpa*, as at Salihundam (p. 222) and Nagarjunakonda (p. 206). For installing the images of Buddha, the entire apse was often converted into a semicircular platform with a moulded façade.

None of these sanctuaries, however, is in such a state of preservation as to show what the external appearance was like and how the roof was constructed. Even the complete early rock-cut *chaitya-grihas*, which are model specimens so far as the internal features are concerned, are of no help in the matter, since, being excavated in the depth of the rock, they have only façades without the other sides of the exterior. Fortunately, there are two brick temples intact, one at Ter (District Osmanabad, Maharashtra) and the other at Chejerla (District Guntur, Andhra Pradesh), both now in the service of the Brahmanical gods, which furnish a rough idea about the superstructure of the *chaitya-grihas*. Apsidal on plan, both have vaulted roofs, semicircular at the back; both have gabled fronts with an arched motif above the doorway and a set of three mouldings at the junction of the vertical wall and the curved roof. At Chejerla there is a flat ceiling obstructing the inside view of the roof. In the temple of Ter the vault was made by corbelling.<sup>31</sup>

The *chaitya-griha*, in its most spectacular aspect, may, however, be seen in the caves of the Deccan, where, unlike in the structural groups of monuments, it formed the primary sanctuary of the establishment housing the principal object of worship. Excavated out of the trap rock, these caves fall into two distinct groups: the earlier group (second century B.C. to second century A.D.), which is characterized by the absence of images of Buddha, shows the beginning and maturity of the form and style and the later group (fifth to seventh centuries) the efflorescence and final signal for decline.

The oldest of the earlier group is formed by four, one each at Bhaja (pp. 151 f.; photos 51 and 97), Ajanta (Cave 10, p. 175), Pitalkhora (p. 172) and Kondane (p. 161). They consist each of a long apsidal hall divided into a front nave for congregation, an apse containing the *stūpa* and aisles demarcated by a colonnade continuing round the

<sup>31</sup> J. Fergusson, J. Burgess and R. P. Spicers, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, I (London, 1910), p. 127.



nave and the apse. The ceiling of the nave and the apse is barrel-vaulted and is braced with wooden beams and rafters, these being still *in situ* at Bhaja (photo 97) and indications of their positions clearly left in the ceiling of the other three specimens. The ceilings of the aisles, on the other hand, are half arches. The pillars are plain octagons, inclined inwards in imitation of wooden prototypes to counteract the outward thrust of the thatched roof. In contrast with the severely plain interior, the façade (photo 51), opposite the *stūpa*, as seen in the preserved upper portion, is embellished with carvings depicting mostly façades of the *chaitya-grihas* and railings. Unfortunately, the lower portion of the façade, including the entrance-door, is preserved in none of them; consequently, the front presents one open archway, the entrance being merged with the horseshoe-shaped window set inside an arch above. The latter was so conspicuous and constant a feature in the scheme of the outer decoration that any motif resembling it has come to be known as *chaitya*-window. A portion of the lower frontage, no doubt, was made of wood. Thus, the rock-cut *chaitya-grihas* were in the beginning faithful replicas of the structural ones of timber not only in general form and detail but also in the actual use of wooden accessories, some of which, like beams and rafters of the ceiling, are useless and redundant.

Once the standard form was fixed, the tendency of evolution was towards the elimination of wooden accessories, greater elaboration of the façade and richer ornamentation of the interior. The façades of Cave 9 (p. 176) at Ajanta and Cave 18<sup>22</sup> (p. 169) at Nasik are intact and they are emancipated of wooden frontage. The specimen (first century B.C.) from Ajanta has two small windows, one on either side of the door, to admit light to the aisles with a flat ceiling. It further deviates from the standard type in having an oblong plan, as in some of the Junnar caves. Among the pillars, the two near the entrance deviate from the usual octagonal type by being square below and above and octagonal in the middle with a chamfering of the corners of the square. Fresh motifs, like pilasters with bell-shaped members and addorsed animal-capitals over stepped abaci, were introduced in the façade of the *chaitya-griha* (photo 108) at Nasik, ascribable to the first century B.C. and A.D. Some of the octagonal pillars of the nave have *ghaṭa*-bases on stepped pedestals.

The early group reached its fulfilment in the two beautiful examples at Bedsa (p. 153) and Karla (p. 154). The specimen (fig. 16) from Bedsa (about first century B.C.-A.D.), earlier and simpler of the two, still retains the rigorously plain interior with octagonal pillars and wooden attachments in the form of beams and rafters. In it was introduced for the first time a high verandah or portico (photo 99), the pillars and pilasters of which are embellished with *ghaṭa*-bases and capitals in the form of animal-riders of bold workmanship (p. 153).

The finest and the largest of all, however, is the one at Karla with its imposing façade and ornamented and well-proportioned interior (photo 50) — a product of the beginning of the second century A.D. On both sides of the three doors, one belonging to the nave and the other two to the aisles, as well as on the other walls of the screened verandah there are sculptured figures of couples (photo 100) of no mean workmanship. But much of the architectural effect of the cave is due to the effective combination of the vaulting with the splendid array of pillars. The well-balanced design of the pillars of the nave — *ghaṭa*-bases

<sup>22</sup> XIII of Burgess.

on stepped pedestals, octagonal shafts, bell-shaped fluted capitals with male and female riders (photo 101) above stepped abaci—is its crowning glory. But even such a highly developed *chaitya-griha* is not free from timber attachments, as there are wooden beams and rafters on the ceiling of the nave and wooden grill in the opening of the window within the horseshoe-shaped arch.

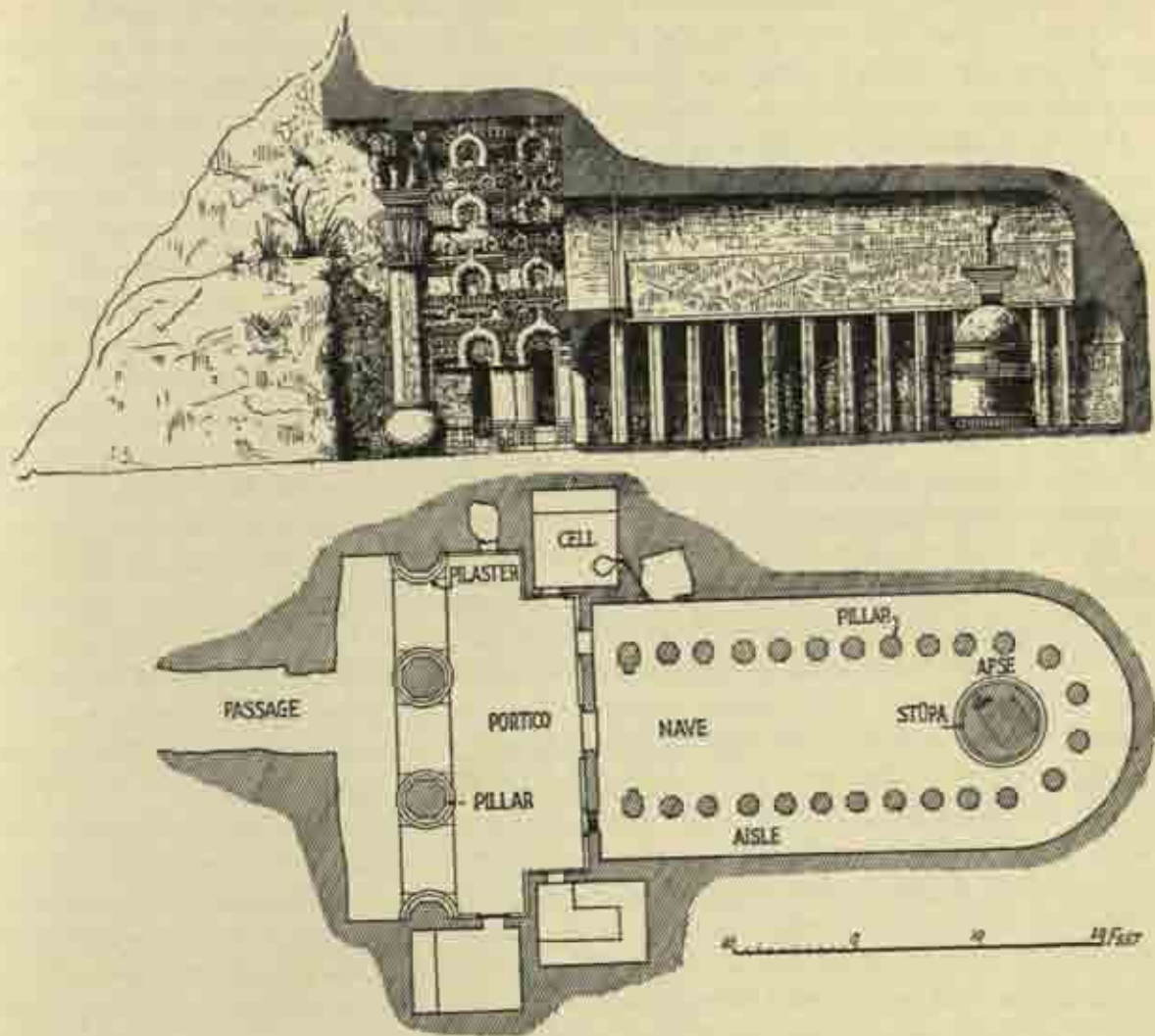


FIG. 16. Bedse: rock-cut apsidal *chaitya-griha*, plan and section.

The last stage (about the end of the second century A.D.) of the early phase is the *chaitya-griha* (p. 166) at Kanheri, a decadent and slovenly copy of the one at Karla. Here, however, the forecourt, fenced by a low wall relieved with a railing-pattern, is intact. On the right pillar in its court was introduced for the first time the figure of Buddha.

The later phase of this particular architectural expression is represented at Ajanta (p. 177) and Ellora (p. 184), the latter having no excavations of the early phase to its credit. As regards architectural content, the form, evolved at Karla and Kanheri, remains



unchanged at Ajanta, the improvements being only in ornamentation and stylistic treatment. The most significant innovation is the introduction of the images of Buddha, not only on the façades and interior walls, but also on the *stūpa* itself. Relegated to a secondary position, the *stūpa* forms almost the ornamental background of the image. The imitation of wooden accessories of the structural prototypes still persists in the stone ribs of the vaulted roofs, but the actual use of timber in beams and rafters is discarded.

Cave 19 (about the end of the fifth century), earlier of the two specimens at Ajanta, with its exquisitely-decorated façade (photo 111) and a small pillared portico is one of the most perfect specimens of its class, combining richness of details with graceful proportions (p. 177). The pillars, with capitals having the figures of Buddha in the centre and various figures at the projecting brackets, are lavishly carved. The triforium above the pillars is also relieved with Buddha-figures separated by panels of scroll-work, the walls being painted with figures of Buddha. In front is a courtyard with side-chapels and cells.

Slightly later in date is Cave 26 (p. 177; photo 112), which, notwithstanding its following the other cave in general arrangement and decoration, gives the feeling of an excessiveness in ornamentation. The pillars, the triforium, the façade and even the interior walls are loaded with carvings in which the figure of Buddha predominates. Although bigger, it lacks the elegant and well-balanced proportion of the earlier cave. It has a pillared verandah, extending across the entire front, and has three entrances. As in Cave 19, there is a court in front with a complex of a subsidiary chapel with cells on either side.

Last in the series is Cave 10 (fig. 17; photo 53) of Ellora (p. 184), locally known as Viśvakarmā, of about the seventh century. Its internal arrangement and the courtyard with a pillared verandah having cells at the back are in much the same style as Cave 26 at Ajanta, though the ornamentation is scantier and less refined. One cannot escape the feeling of decline in the artistic quality in this example. The image of Buddha is conspicuous enough to foreshadow the *stūpa*, in the projected front portion of which it is carved. Here is, indeed, the beginning of the decadence of this particular form.

The difference in architectural form with earlier examples is glaring in the treatment of the exterior, which has almost lost the characteristic external features. The gigantic *chaitya*-window, which used to dominate the entire scheme of the frontage, has now been compressed into a small circular aperture in the top foil of a trefoil arch, below which are three oblong doors opening into an inner gallery. On the same façade, but towards the ends, are two niches crowned by representations of spires of temples. In front of this façade is an outer gallery made by the roof of the verandah.

This is to our present knowledge, the last attempt of such an architectural form in live rock. It went out of fashion during this period not only in rock-cut architecture but even in structural examples. Temple 18 (p. 98) at Sanchi is one of the last of its kind, and that too is built on the foundation of an apsidal hall of the Śuṅga period. Built on a platform, this seventh-century sanctuary consists of an apse enclosed on the back and sides by a wall, a nave having pillars in the sides and the front, aisles encompassed by a wall and a front porch or antechamber approached by a flight of steps. This *chaitya-griha* underwent additions in the tenth or eleventh century when the floor-level of the apse was raised and richly-carved door-jambs were also added.

The reason for the gradual decline in use and ultimate disappearance of this type was the growing popularity of the image, which, due to a long tradition, at first allowed the *stūpa* to remain in a secondary position, but afterwards replaced it in the sanctum. With

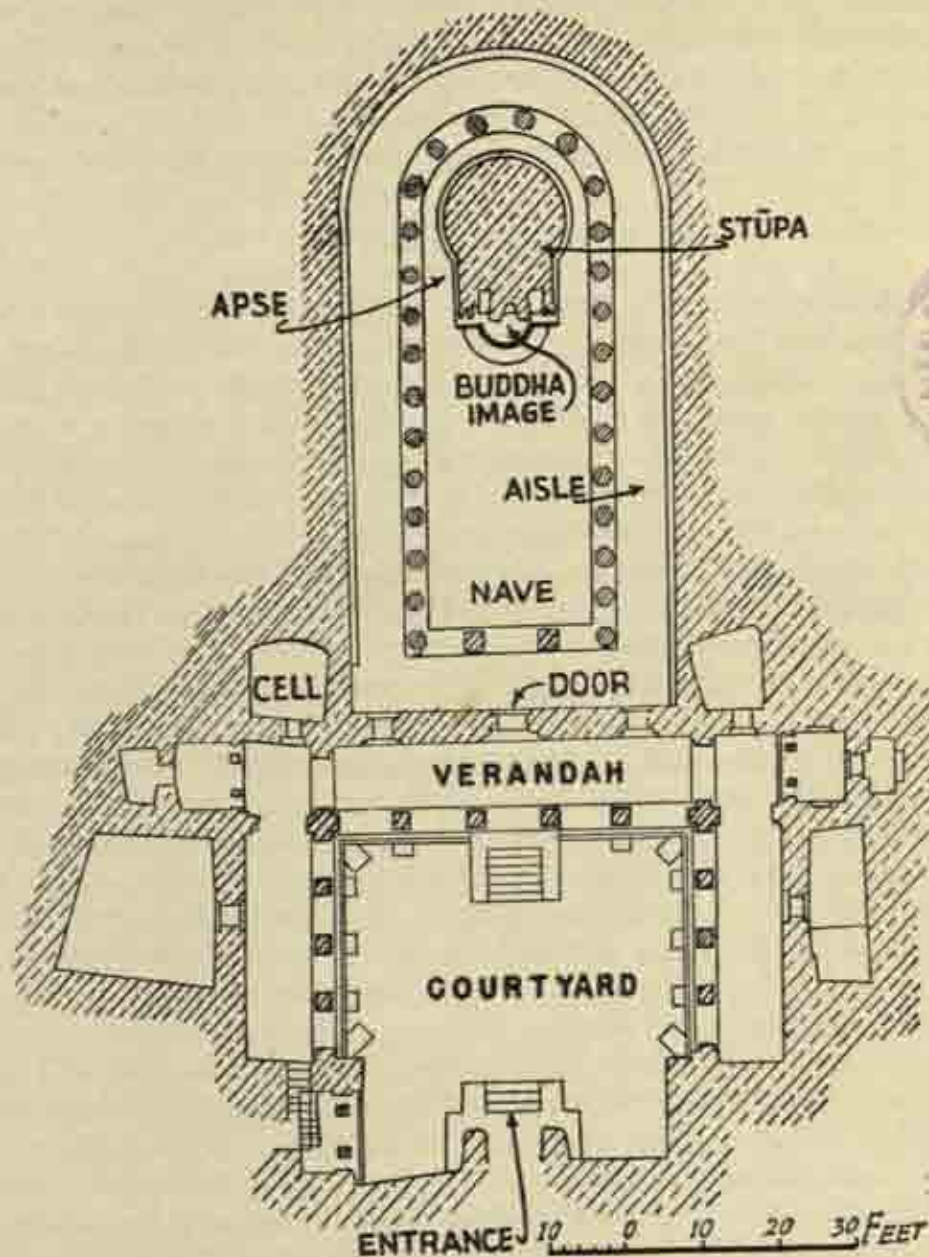


FIG. 17. Ellora: rock-cut apsidal *chaitya-griha*, plan

the discarding of the *stūpa* in the sanctum, the apsidal form lost its utility. Added to the changing character of the cult was also the widespread use of temples with an entirely different architectural development among the followers of other creeds. The lavishly-carved ostentatious temples of soaring heights in all their splendour fired at once the



imagination of the people. Even in live rock the excavators tried to emulate these forms, the noblest and the most spectacular of such attempts being the Brahmanical temple of Kailāsa at Ellora itself. The Buddhists were no longer satisfied with the form which had reached its fulfilment, leaving any further possibility for elaboration. So they devoted their attention to the little-used square form,<sup>33</sup> which offered them a wide scope to work out vast conceptions of great magnitudes. Thus died out after an unbroken continuity of about a thousand years an architectural form that had bequeathed to us a rich heritage in the form of a magnificent series of rock-cut caves in different parts of the country.

#### D. THE TEMPLE

If the Buddhists were not the first to raise *stūpas*, far less were they the innovators of temples. The Buddhist temple-architecture and also art in their practical application are virtually indistinguishable from Indian architecture and art in general. Throughout all ages, Buddhist temples and sculptures have closely shared in the main trends of Indian architecture and art in technique, style and form, the iconographical concepts being the main criterion in differentiating the religious affiliation. Architectonically, therefore, there is no difference in the treatment of Buddhist, Jaina and Brahmanical temples produced in a particular zone at a given period. The same set of architects and sculptors, evidently, met the demands of a clientele, be he the devotee of Buddha or the Tirthankaras or of the gods of the Brahmanical pantheon. Consequently, Buddhist temple-architecture has to be studied against the total Indian background.

An isolated type of temples peculiar to Buddhist establishments alone is furnished by the *stūpa*-shaped sanctuaries of Kolvi (pp. 137 f.; photo 91) and Binnayaga (p. 139; photo 92) in Rajasthan. It faithfully emulated the outward appearance of *stūpas* in all their details. With a very limited distribution, this type failed to become popular in India.

Unfortunately, very few Buddhist structural temples with their superstructure unscathed have come down to us. In most instances they have survived up to a height of a few feet above the ground, and their superstructure has to be reconstructed from the fallen architectural members. Below are noticed those specimens which still stand either to their top or to an appreciable height.

The earliest such example is the unpretentious Temple 17 (photo 56) at Sanchi (p. 98) built in the early Gupta period—an age when experiments in different architectural forms were undertaken. Made of ashlar stonework, it consists of a flat-roofed square sanctum with a portico having four pillars in front. The interior is severely plain; so also are the three exterior walls except for the moulded base and a string course in continuation of the architrave over the pillars in front. The front and also the portico-pillars are, however, elegantly carved. The pillars and pilasters of the portico are each composed of a shaft,

<sup>33</sup> This plan, though rare, is not entirely unknown in *chaitya-grihas* (e.g. *Griha-stūpa* A<sub>12</sub> of Kalawan; cf. Marshall, *Taxila*, I, p. 329). The pillared *chaitya-griha* on the hill of Bojjannakonda near Sankaram is an example in rock, this being a class by itself on account of its uncommon design (pp. 219 f.). The square plan and the flat ceiling of such type of structures became the nucleus of the north Indian temple Order.



passing from square to eight and sixteen sides, a bell-shaped lotus, a cable-filleted necking and a block abacus surmounted by a square lion-capital, the addorsed lions having eight bodies with four heads. The door-jambs are decorated with vertical bands of foliate and rosette patterns; next to them are two pilasters with bell-shaped capitals, their shafts similar to those of the pillars; the abacus over them supported a detached figure which is now missing. Light is admitted only through the doorway, there being no other opening. In spite of its small proportions and unassuming appearance, the temple receives universal appreciation on account of its classic qualities of structural propriety, logical proportions and restraint in ornamentation. This temple (along with the analogous Brahmanical temples at Tigowa, Eran, etc.), with its cubical cella having a single doorway, is regarded as the basic form of the developed temples with *sikharas*.

About a century later is the original fabric of the present Mahābodhi temple (photo 54) at Bodh-Gaya (p. 61) which, notwithstanding the simplicity of design and decoration, is of unique importance, being the sole survivor of a style of architecture which was in vogue in this region and of which vestiges are still in existence in the ruined temples at Nālandā and a few other places. In spite of having been subjected to many changes, including a complete overhauling in the eighties of the nineteenth century, curiously enough it retains the dimensions and broad features which characterized it in the time of Hiuen Tsang, as is evident from the following description of the pilgrim <sup>24</sup>to the east of the Bodhi Tree was a temple (*ching-shé*) above 160 feet high, and with a front breadth at the base of above twenty paces. This temple was made of bricks and coated with lime; it had tiers of niches with gold images; its four walls were adorned with exquisite carvings of pearl-strings and genii; on the roof was a gilt copper āmalaka; connected with the east side of the temple were three lofty halls<sup>24</sup> one behind another; the woodwork of these halls was adorned with gold and silver carvings and studded with precious stones of various colours, and an open passage through them communicated with the inner chamber. On the left-hand side of the outside door of these halls was an image of Kuan-tzū-tsai P'usa, and on the right one of Tzū-shi (Maitreya) P'usa, each made of silver and above ten feet high.<sup>25</sup>

Built of brick in clay, the temple, with the top of the vertical walls around the lower sanctum sanctorum forming a high terrace around the upper cella, has a straight-edged, sharp and elongated-pyramidal spire, square in section, truncated near the top and crowned by an āmalaka-shaped member with a miniature *stūpa* and a *chhatrāvali* (found missing before the restoration of 1880-81) as the finial. The height of the temple excluding the *chhatrāvali* is about 160 ft. from the ground. A double flight of stone steps built in the thickness of the walls of the porch gives access to the terrace and also the upper cella. The miniature replicas of the main spire set at the four corners of the terrace and also the crowning element above the upper porch were built in 1880-81 on meagre evidence.

The façades of the terrace which, as already noted, forms the body of the sanctum sanctorum, were originally embellished above the mouldings at the base with a continuous

<sup>24</sup> Most probably they represent the pillared portico, porch behind it and the passage leading to the sanctum.

<sup>25</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), p. 116.



frieze of panelled niches between pilasters, each niche containing a seated image made in stucco.<sup>36</sup> Over the frieze and between two sets of mouldings is a beaded garland held at intervals by a series of *kirti-mukhas* with figures of *ganai* below alternate *kirti-mukhas* ('pearl-strings and genii' of Hiuen Tsang). Then comes a row of *chaitya*-windows, each originally containing a seated image of Buddha, over which is a second set of sunken niches with shallow blind arches in the centre and pilasters at the sides, the whole being surmounted by a moulded cornice.

Each face of the spire has four recesses between five inconspicuous projections, all in one plane, the central projection being the broadest. Horizontally, the projections are divided into seven storeys, each stage consisting of a sunken oblong niche, between pilasters, with a base-moulding below and an architrave above capped by a *chaitya*-window; the arrangement in the central projection is slightly more elaborate in that the *chaitya*-window is further supported by a set of four pilasters and two smaller *chaitya*-windows, one each above the capital of the main pilasters. The corner projections are distinguished by a crowning *amalaka*-shaped member (reminiscent of the *bhūmi-amlās* of the *rekha* temples), which, like the *chaitya*-windows of the central projections, partly covers the panelled niche of the next higher stage. The recesses have also arched niches. Most of these niches and *chaitya*-windows had originally designs in stucco, the niches in the lowest stage above the base-mouldings being distinguished for the stucco images of Buddha, of which those of the central ones were the largest in size. Above the projections is a set of plain horizontal mouldings. The entire temple from top to bottom was plastered with lime. Successive accretions of such plaster with the resultant deterioration of the decorations were noticed during the restoration of 1880-81.

Analysing the predominant decorative elements one will find to his surprise the repetitions of a group of four motifs—horizontal moulding, panelled niche, pilaster and *chaitya*-window—the assemblage representing the front view of a pillared pavilion with barrel-vaulted roof. With these simple motifs, it is, therefore, a remarkable achievement on the part of the architect to produce such a magnificent effect in a temple, which, with its soaring height, stands majestically in all elegance.

The ceilings of both the upper and lower shrine-chambers are now vaulted, but that of the closed chamber above the upper cella is flat, resting on six thick wooden beams, the opening being narrowed by the gradual sloping of the four walls. There is reason to believe that the vault of the two shrine-chambers was not a part of the original scheme and was introduced during one of the restorations. The arches over the entrance-door, which, presumably, supersede the original spanning by corbels, also go with this period.

Miniature representations of this temple are not rare. Thus, in the Nālandā Museum there are two stone miniatures. A miniature in bronze (photo 55) has been found at

<sup>36</sup> Several of these seated images—mostly of Buddha—of the Gupta style, existed on the western face even in the seventies of the nineteenth century before the restoration (cf. pl. XII B of A. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*). All of them are now replaced by stone sculptures, mostly mutilated, which were all collected from the neighbourhood.



Jhewari (East Pakistan). It is evident that so high was the sanctity of the temple that its form itself became an object of worship among the devotees. Copies of this temple were made in Buddhist countries outside India (e.g. Mahābodhi Pagoda of Pagan) as well.<sup>27</sup>

An unusual form of architecture, which failed to take deep root in India but was adopted in south-east Asia, is provided by the terraced edifice (photo 141) of Paharpur (p. 241), which had its second in a ruined structure at Mainamati (p. 245). Unfortunately, its superstructure above the central block is entirely missing, and we have no evidence about its shape which might have simulated the form of a *stūpa* as in the Abeyadāna and Patothamya temples at Pagan (Burma). The remains of a third terraced structure of this type have recently been unearthed at Antichak (p. 57, foot-note 1).

The temple (circa tenth century A.D.), forming part of Monastery 45 (p. 99) of Sanchi, is now stripped of its facing stones. It (photo 58) was of the north Indian *rekha* type with a *śikhara*, crowned by an *āmalaka* and a *kalāśa*, as is evident not only from the portion standing but also from dismembered architectural fragments like *āmalaka*, *kalāśa* and stones relieved with *chaitya*-windows. As it stands, the temple consists of a narrow antechamber and a sanctum, square internally and *pañcha-ratha* externally, located at the back of a platform approached by steps. There is a walled processional path on three sides of the sanctum and antechamber. The spire is not solid, and there exists a hollow chamber over the carved ceiling. The latter, constructed on the principle of diminishing squares, is carried on architraves supported by brackets set above the corner pilasters as well as by independent brackets coming out from the middle of the walls. Like the Orissan temples of this date, the central projections on three sides have niches, in which are placed the images of Buddha and Mañjuśrī in place of the *pāśvā-devatās* of the Brahmanical temples. The door-jambs of the antechamber are carved in the contemporary style, adopting such characteristically Brahmanical motifs as the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

One of the latest Buddhist temples exists at Ratnagiri (p. 226), the enshrined deity, Mahākāla, being worshipped as a Brahmanical god. The façades of the temple (photo 57) do not have any sculptures, but the fabric of the temple holds together. Architecturally, the *deul* is an ordinary specimen of the Orissan temples of the *rekha* order. In fact, except for the enshrined deity and the crowning member<sup>28</sup> in the semblance of a *stūpa*, there is no distinguishing feature which differentiates it from a typical Brahmanical temple of the Orissan type.

*Pañcha-ratha* on plan, the *deul* (28 ft. high up to the top of the *khopuri*) has five divisions in the vertical portion of its body below the curvilinear spire. The lowest portion, known as *pābhāga* ('foot', the temple being likened to a human body) in the Orissan *Śilpāśāstras*, consists of three plain mouldings, *khurā*, *kumbha* and *basanta*. The portion above the last is known as *jāṅgha* ('shin'), which is divided into the *tala* (lower) and *upar* (upper) by a set of three mouldings, known as *bāndhanā* (bond), the central

<sup>27</sup> Taw Sein Ko, *Archaeological Notes on Pagan* (Rangoon, 1917), p. 21.

<sup>28</sup> The crowning members of a Buddhist temple, as may be seen on paintings and sculptures, generally take the form of a miniature *stūpa* with the umbrella.



mouldings of the latter being relieved at intervals with a roundel containing a floral motif. The three sides of the *jāṅgha* are each provided with a niche for *pārśva-decatās* (now vacant), above which in the form of a projected *chhajjā* is a *khurā*-shaped moulding. Above the upper *jāṅgha* is a series of five mouldings—*khurā*, *pheni*, *noli*, *paṭā* and *basanta*—which constitute the *varaṇḍa*, over which is a row of lotus-petals, one on each segment of the spire, called *gaṇḍi* ('trunk'). The latter is austere plain except for a rampant lion on a rectangular block on the central projections (*rāhā*) and the representation of a miniature *pañcha-ratha* temple below the lion on the frontal *rāhā*. The *mastaka* ('head') above the *gaṇḍi* consists of a *beki* ('neck'), an enormous *amlā* and a flattish bell-shaped member called *khapuri* ('skull'). The crowning member above the last is made of two parts; the upper one, with a central depression inside, covering the lower is shaped in the form of a *stūpa* and contains a central hole, evidently for the insertion of a *chhatra* or a banner.

The lowest flat ceiling, being supported by an iron beam, rests on seven corbels. There is a corbelled niche above the lintel of the doorway. The masonry is dry, the stones being held in position by their weight and balance, aided by iron cramps and dowels. Originally, the temple was plastered.

### PART III

## DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND MONUMENTS

### 1. BIHAR, UTTAR PRADESH AND NEPALESE TARAI

Bihar and Uttar Pradesh may be described as the sanctum sanctorum of early Buddhism, as Buddha's life and activities centred round places in these two States. While the former, the very nomenclature of which is after a monastery (*vihāra*), was the birth-place of the faith, the latter witnessed its adolescence, development and maturity. Out of the Four Great Places of pilgrimage (pp. 8 and 9), one, Bodh-Gaya (p. 60), is situated in Bihar, and two, Sarnath (p. 66) and Kuśinagara (p. 69), are in Uttar Pradesh. The fourth, Lumbinī (p. 58), though now immediately beyond the northern border of Uttar Pradesh, originally formed part of the ancient Kosala comprising Oudh. Of the remaining four sacred places, Rajgir (p. 71) and Vaiśālī (p. 73) are in Bihar and Sāṅkāśya (p. 5) and Śrāvastī (p. 75) are in Uttar Pradesh. Besides these places, there are many others in which Buddha delivered his discourses.

To the Buddhist this region was particularly sacred, as the Divine One sanctified by his footsteps many of its villages and towns and propounded to the people of this land all his doctrines. Again, in this territory, where three out of four *Mahā-saṅgītis* (Great Councils) took place, the earliest Buddhist literature, canonizing Buddha's sermons, was written down, while the early philosophical ideas were also formulated. Its importance in the Buddhist world even in the later period was not reduced, thanks to the exceptionally high standard of learning, the disciplined life of residents and the brilliant attainments of the versatile teachers of its teaching centres of international repute like Nālandā (p. 86), Uddanāpura (also known as Odantapurī, p. 16) and Vikramaśilā, from which Buddhist philosophy and religion radiated to the entire Buddhist world up to the Muslim conquest. While Uddanāpura (p. 18) and Vikramaśilā<sup>1</sup> hardly survived the wrathful onslaught of Islam towards the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D., Nālandā, where the blow was not as severe

<sup>1</sup> The site of the Vikramaśilā-mahāvihāra has generally been identified with Antichak (District Bhagalpur, Bihar) near Patharghata (on the bank of the Ganges), 8 miles north of the Colgong railway-station. Recent excavation at Antichak uncovered, among other Buddhist structures and antiquities, the remains of an imposing brick edifice. With its cruciform plan and two terraces, the edifice strongly recalls the one (pp. 241f) at Paharpur. The exterior faces of the terraces were decorated with mouldings. The recess above the bottom set of mouldings of both the terraces was embellished with terracotta plaques in the tradition of Paharpur. The outer edge of the upper terrace, which formed the *pradakṣiṇa-pāṭha*, had walls pierced by windows. The middle projections of the central block above the upper terrace accommodated each, as at Paharpur, a shrine-chamber fronted by a pillared porch. All the shrines contained an image of Buddha seated against the back walls. The upper portion of the central solid square block is missing. In the absence of the provision of a staircase it is presumed that the central solid block was shaped like a *stūpa*.



as in the other two, strove tenaciously to maintain at least a shadow of its former glory for over a century more, after which it sank into oblivion. Indeed, the oblivion was so complete in the homeland that it would have been impossible to resurrect the fabric of these institutions unless it was for the invaluable Chinese and Tibetan records.

In conformity with the high sanctity of this holy land, there grew up myriads of Buddhist establishments dotting the entire land, of which only a few are noticed below. Hiuen Tsang (p. 16; photo 59) travelled extensively in this region, faithfully recording details about more than forty cherished centres with smaller units in their vicinity. His enlightening account of this tract is particularly interesting and elaborate.

#### A. LUMBINĪ

Lumbinī, in the lovely grove of which Māyādevī on the way to her parents' home at Devahraḍa retired immediately before her confinement (p. 1), has been identified with Rūmmindei (lat. 27° 28' N.; long. 83° 16' 40" E.) in District Bhairhwa, Nepalese Tarai, on the indubitable evidence of Asoka's pillar which proudly proclaims: 'Here was born the sage of the Śākya.' It is approachable from the Nowgarh railway-station (on the Gonda-Gorakhpur line) by bus, the distance being only 21 miles. By its east side flows a streamlet called Tilar-nadi, the Oil (*tela*) River (*nadi*) of Hiuen Tsang. Although located in the midst of plains, the site has the most picturesque background in the distant snow-clad peaks of Annapurna, Matsyapuchchha and Dhavalgiri overlooking the Mahabharata range, black with deep jungles.

The site with its ruins largely corresponds to the account of Hiuen Tsang who described the La-fa-ni grove in the following terms:

'In this Grove was the beautiful bathing tank of the Sakyas, and about twenty-four paces from it was the old asoka tree at which the Buddha had been born into the world. On the east of this was an Asoka tope, at the place where two dragons washed the newly born prince with hot and cold water. To the east of this were two clear springs with topes where two dragons emerged on the birth of the P'usa and produced two springs. South of these was a tope where Indra received the newborn infant P'usa. Next to it were four topes to the four Devarājas who had taken charge of the baby Buddha after his birth. Near these topes was a stone pillar set up by Asoka with the figure of a horse on the top. Afterwards the pillar had been broken in the middle, and laid on the ground (that is, half of it), by a thunderbolt from a malicious dragon. Near this pillar was a small stream flowing south-east, and called by the people the Oil River. It was originally a tank of a pure oily liquid produced by the devas for the use of the Buddha's mother in cleansing herself from earthly soil after the birth of her son. The tank had become changed into a stream of water which, however, still retained its oily character.'

The most interesting piece of antiquity here is, of course, the sandstone pillar (photo 60) bearing the characteristic Mauryan polish and having tiny blackish specks, the quarry of the stone being, as usual, the neighbourhood of Chunar. The pillar has a vertical fissure down to the middle, and its top is broken off probably by lightning, as noted by Hiuen Tsang. The height of the extant part, above the rough hammer-dressed surface meant



to be buried below ground, is 24 ft. 3 in. The crowning elements, except the bell-shaped lotus member (in two halves) which now lies on the paved platform in front of the Rummindei temple, are missing. On the pillar, at a height of 11 ft. 2½ in. above the rough surface, is a pithy inscription (photo 61) of Aśoka in five lines recording that he, twenty years after his coronation, paid homage in person to the spot where Buddha was born, that he erected a stone wall around the place as well as a commemorative pillar and exempted the village of Lumbini from paying taxes except only one-eighth share of the produce. Near the present top are several later records of pilgrims, of which one is the well-known *mantra* 'Om Maṇipadme hūm' in Tibetan characters.

To the immediate north-east and south-east of the pillar are two small brick *stūpas*, both with a square base, while to its south-west is a *tri-ratha* brick plinth of moderate dimensions. These three structures are much later in date than the pillar of Aśoka. To the north-west of the pillar is a damaged cell-like structure.

A few yards to the east of the pillar is a modern flat-roofed temple with a spacious paved platform around. Inside the temple is enshrined a fragmentary image (photo 62), variously known as Rupādei (Rupādevī) and Rummindei (Rummindevī), the tutelary goddess of Lumbini. It presents in high relief the nativity of Buddha. Māyādevī, nearly life-sized, stands under a tree grasping its branch with her right hand, her left hand resting on her hip. On her right side and supporting her is a woman, presumably her sister Mahāprajāpatī. Beyond the latter is the slightly-bent figure of Śakra, with a high crown, who is in the attitude of receiving the new-born child as the latter emerges from his mother's right side. The small figure of Gautama with a halo round his head stands below. Just behind Śakra is a male figure. Stylistically ascribable to the early Gupta period, the sculpture is badly damaged.

The modern temple and the high platform are built over the ruins of several subsidiary structures, including *stūpas*, and the magnificently-decorated plinth of an early temple unearthed by P. C. Mukherji in 1899. The early temple consisted of a brick sanctuary and an oblong antechamber facing east and enshrined the nativity scene now present in the modern temple. The plinth of the sanctuary was the most exquisite of its kind. *Sapta-ratha* on plan, excluding the minor projections, it was relieved with several horizontal mouldings, each again richly embellished with a variety of motifs of fine workmanship. This plinth and the *stūpas* excavated by P. C. Mukherji in the immediate vicinity of the temple are no longer visible, as they are completely engulfed by the wall of the present paved platform.

The site of the old temple, presumably, marks the spot where Gautama was born. It is likely that the stone enclosure of Aśoka lies buried below either the plinth of this very temple or the ruins of a still earlier temple. An oblong enclosure with a central structure lies partially buried below the long staircase of the modern temple. The enclosure appears to have been built over a ruined earlier structure.

To the south of the temple is a tank, the banks of which have recently been veneered with bricks in terraces. This tank, no doubt, represents the bathing-tank of the Śākyas mentioned by Hiuen Tsang.

On the east bank of the tank are many ruined brick structures, most of which are



bases of small brick *stūpas*. Six<sup>2</sup> of these *stūpas* stand in a row in the east-west alignment beyond the north-east corner of the tank. Below these structures are earlier foundations. Near the south-east corner of the tank is a quadrangular brick monastery with an array of cells on four sides of a courtyard. The intact floors of two of the cells are made of large bricks. Above the ruins of this monastery are traces of a structure, representing possibly a later monastery.

A few feet to the east-south-east of the staircase of the modern temple is a plinth, most probably of a shrine, standing up to a height of 6 ft. and built of bricks of large dimensions. It has a central projection on each of its four sides; the projection on the west side is conspicuously large and might have contained the steps leading to the top.

A group of sixteen votive *stūpas* of bricks existed till 1957 to the north side of the path leading to the east staircase of the modern temple of Rummindei. To the north of the latter are three small brick *stūpas*, each with a square base. Below the middle *stūpa* is an earlier structure.

Besides these structures, which were exposed partly by P. C. Mukherji in 1899 and partly at the instance of Kaiser Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana<sup>3</sup> in 1933-34, there are others. Indeed, the ruins extend eastward to the bank of the Tilar. Some of the structures had been demolished when the road to Lumbini, the new rest-house and the building of the Health Centre were constructed.

Of the antiquities unearthed by the Rana, some are dumped in the old rest-house. These include a mottled red sandstone head of Buddha of the Kushān period from the atelier of Mathura, a large number of terracotta heads (some of the Gupta style) and panels, stone sculptures (some of the ninth-tenth century A.D.) representing Buddha, Mañjuśrī, Maitreya, Lokeśvara and the Great Miracle of Śrāvastī (p. 5), a leaf-shaped terracotta plaque with the Buddhist creed (p. 4) in characters of the eighth-ninth century A.D., two early bronze male figures—one with folded hands and the other with a lotus in the right hand (photo 63)—, and a large number of terracotta tiles relieved with Buddhist scenes and decorative patterns.

To judge from the available antiquities, the Buddhist establishment of Lumbini maintained its existence till at least the tenth century A.D.

## B. BODH-GAYA

The modern village of Bodh-Gaya<sup>4</sup> (lat. 24° 42' N.; long. 85° 0' E.; District Gaya, Bihar) on the bank of the Lilajan (ancient Nairāṇjanā) has grown up around the ancient Sambodhi, the holiest of the holy spots, near the ancient village of Uruvelā (modern Urel within a mile of the Mahābodhi temple of the place). Sambodhi later on became

<sup>2</sup> The row of four *stūpas* with a fifth near its north-east exposed by P. C. Mukherji near the north and north-east side of the tank has disappeared leaving scanty traces of foundations.

<sup>3</sup> The two conspicuous *stūpa*-like mounds with a small brick tower on the crown were made in 1934 with the excavated rubbish. Many of the pilgrims circumambulate them under the false impression of their being *stūpas*.

<sup>4</sup> It is easily accessible from the Gaya railway-station by any conveyance, the distance being 8 miles.



Mahābodhi, by which name the entire Buddhist establishment came to be designated in later times, though the Tibetan pilgrim Dharmasvāmin (p. 63) refers to it as Vajrāsana.

The pipal tree (*asvattha*, *Ficus religiosa*), at the foot of which Gautama obtained his Bodhi (p. 2), formed the nucleus of a great establishment. The tree which is now present at the back of the Mahābodhi temple is only its remote successor. We have no record of the number of times it died but was revived through grafts and seeds. The first destructive attempt on the tree is stated to have been made by Tishyarakshitā, Queen of Aśoka, jealous on account of her husband's inordinate attachment to it. According to Hiuen Tsang, it perished once again at the hands of Śaśāṅka, the anti-Buddhist king of Gauḍa, in the seventh century A.D., but was brought back to life a few months later by Pūrṇavarman, a king of Magadha. The present tree sprang up out of the roots of its immediate predecessor which had fallen down in 1876.

The earliest construction at the foot of the Bodhi tree was a polished sandstone throne (*vajrāsana*) found by Cunningham buried behind a stucco-faced throne, the latter itself hidden inside the present basalt throne of the temple. It is ascribed to Aśoka who, as one of his edicts avouches, undertook pilgrimage (*dharma-yātrā*) to Sambodhi. On the evidence of a relief on the railing of Bharhut (p. 92 ff.), the same monarch is credited with the erection of a shrine over the *vajrāsana*, a railing around it and the tree and a pillar with an elephant-capital. No trace, however, of these structures is visible now.

The earliest vestiges that are visible now are of the first century B.C. They consist of: a carved stone seat (*vajrāsana*), the one in front of the Bodhi tree; the remnants of a carved quadrangular three-barred railing of pale reddish sandstone (photo 64), which originally formed the enclosure of the Bodhi tree, fronted by a pillared pavilion, the latter in turn containing a throne within; and pillar-bases (found *in situ*) and a detached pillar of the covered promenade (*chaṅkama*) of Buddha. The largest contributions towards the erection of the railing were by three ladies, including two queens, of the seraglio of a line of Mitra kings. The *chaṅkama* marks the sacred spot where Buddha spent the third week after his Enlightenment, meditatively walking up and down (p. 2). It is now a brick platform with representations of lotuses which are believed to have blossomed forth under the footsteps of Buddha. The railing of Bharhut bears a relief of the covered promenade (photo 8).

The railing was enlarged in the Gupta period by new granite posts, cross-bars and copings, which, though cleverly interwoven with the earlier ones, were in a different style of carving. For, its enlargement and re-erection in its present position became a necessity in order to provide space for the large temple (p. 53)—the nucleus of the present Mahābodhi temple (photo 54)—erected during this period at the foot of the Bodhi tree to house an image of Buddha on a throne in place of the earlier vacant throne. The plinth of the sandstone railing and the lower parts of two broken pillars of the earlier pavilion got buried within the basement of the present temple. The southern row of pillars of the covered promenade was similarly engulfed by the northern wall of the new brick temple, the façade of which was embellished with images in stucco within tiers of niches. A record, in characters of the sixth or seventh century A.D., refers to the stucco-work of this temple.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, 1908-09* (Calcutta, 1912), pp. 153-54.



As already noted (p. 53), the temple (*Vajrāsana-bṛihad-gandha-kūṭi*) assumed the appearance of the present temple (photo 54) not only in dimensions and broad features but also in decorations by the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit, as the pilgrim's description of it was substantially true of the existing structure before the repair of 1880-81. During that repair it was found out that the temple had undergone major repairs and renovations more than once; scrupulous care had, however, been taken to simulate, though not always very successfully, the original decorations.

Around this temple and the *Bodhi* tree behind it grew up in no time myriads of monuments, mostly votive *stūpas*, sanctuaries being fewer in number. Fa-hien saw three monasteries in a flourishing condition.

A graphic and comprehensive description of the Mahābodhi complex is left by Hiuen Tsang, a portion of which may be reproduced here, as it is largely applicable even to the present remains: 'The enclosing walls . . . are built of brick, high and strong; the inclosure is long from east to west, and narrow from north to south . . . The principal gate opens east towards the Nairāṇjana River, the south gate is connected with a large flower-tank, the west limit is a natural defence, and the north gate communicates with the grounds inside the walls of a large monastery. The sacred traces are very close together; topes or shrines (*ching-shē*) have been raised, as memorials, by sovereigns, high officials, or nobles of India who were pious Buddhists . . . to the east of the Bodhi Tree was a temple (*ching-shē*) above 160 feet high, and with a front breadth at the base of above twenty paces . . . to the north of the Bodhi Tree was the place of Buddha's walking up and down . . . There were eighteen strange ornaments for the footsteps in the ten paces of his walking: here men of after times made a base of bricks above three feet high . . . At each of the four corners of the Bodhi Tree inclosure . . . was a large tope . . . Within this inclosure . . . the sacred memorials were crowded together, and it would be impossible to enumerate them . . . Outside of the south gate of the Bodhi Tree, or the Bodhi Tree inclosure (D), was a large tank . . . Outside of the north gate of the Bodhi Tree is the Mahābodhi Saṅghārāma built by a former king of Ceylon . . . In this establishment there were nearly 1000 ecclesiastics all Mahāyānists of the Sthavira school, and all perfect in Vmāya observances.'<sup>6</sup>

All vestiges of this monastery, partly exposed by Cunningham, are now buried inside the raised ground on which have been constructed several modern structures. This monastery was most probably the gift of the Ceylonese king Meghavarmā or Meghavarna, who, according to Wang-hiuen-tse, sent an envoy to Samudragupta (c. 335-76) of the Gupta dynasty for obtaining his permission to have a monastery for the accommodation of the Ceylonese monks and pilgrims.<sup>7</sup>

Ceylon had an intimate connection with Sambodhi since the planting of a graft of the *Bodhi* tree at Anurādhapura during the reign of Aśoka, as may be gathered from several inscriptions. As early as the first century B.C. a pilgrim from Tāmraparṇi participated in the gift of the railing around the *Bodhi* tree. In the fifth century A.D. the *śramaṇa* Prakhyātakīrti,

<sup>6</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan Chuang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), pp. 113-36.

<sup>7</sup> Benimadhab Barua, *Gayā and Buddha-Gayā*, I (Calcutta, 1934), pp. 180-81.



belonging to the royal family of Laṅkā (Ceylon), performed acts of worship at the *Ratna-traya*. About a century after this, Mahānāman, a *sthavira* of that land, dedicated an image of Buddha. In the year 588-89, Mahānāman constructed a mansion of Buddha at Bodhimāṇḍa. The installation of an image of Buddha by the Ceylonese Udayasīri in about the twelfth century A.D. is recorded by an inscription preserved in the Patna Museum.

The establishment flourished tremendously during the long rule of the Pālas. Some of the available inscriptions recording dedications are dated in the reign of the rulers of this dynasty. By far the majority of the innumerable images, which still exist in or near the temple and in the neighbourhood (the largest collection—actually a storehouse—being in the residence of the Śaiva Mahant, who was in charge of the Mahābodhi complex till recently), belong to the Pāla period. The most common figure is Buddha, seated under the *Bodhi* tree in *bhūmi-sparsa-mudrā*—the attitude associated with the Enlightenment—but the figures of other divinities of the Buddhist pantheon including those of the Vajrayāna are also fairly prolific.

If the Buddhists resorted to Nālandā for learning, they flocked to Mahābodhi, the most sacred place of pilgrimage, for its special sanctity. The ambition of every pious Buddhist, no matter Indian or foreign, was to perform pilgrimage to the sacred spot, offer his prayer at the foot of the image of Buddha at Vajrāsana and erect memorials according to his mite. Thus grew up the multitude of votive offerings, mostly in the form of *stūpas* (photo 40)—the spontaneous and tangible expressions of devotion. Their number shows the magnitude of Buddhist devotional piety. Many of these *stūpas* are monolithic, others are of stonework and still others of brick. Among the pilgrims' records are a few in Chinese characters.

Unlike most of the centres of northern India, this establishment survived the shock of the Muslim invasion of Bihar. It, however, did not escape entirely unscathed from the hands of these invaders, as we can gather from the biography of the Tibetan monk-pilgrim Chag lo-tā-ba Chos-rje-dpal (the translator Dharmasvāmin), who visited Vajrāsana (Bodh-Gaya), Rājagriha and Nālandā in A.D. 1234-36. This pilgrim furnished an eyewitness account of the unsteady condition of the area overrun by the Muslims who were still to establish a stable government. When he reached Vajrāsana in 1234, 'the place was deserted and only four monks were found staying (in the Vihāra). One (of them) said, "It is not good! All have fled from fear of the Turushka soldiery." They blocked up the door in front of the Mahābodhi image with bricks and plastered it. Near it they placed another image as a substitute. They also plastered the outside door (of the temple). On its surface they drew the image of Maheśvara in order to protect it from non-Buddhists'.<sup>8</sup> These monks, too, fled away and also with them Dharmasvāmin. After seventeen days, when the Muslim forces were reported to have gone far away, they returned, and normal condition was restored. The partition-wall was removed and the image, which had been deprived of its emerald eyes by a Turushka soldier on an earlier occasion, in the sanctum came to be worshipped.

Dharmasvāmin met Buddhasena, the ruler of Magadha, who resided near Vajrāsana

<sup>8</sup> G. Roerich and A. S. Altekar, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin* (Patna, 1959), p. 64.



itself. This king also fled to the forest in apprehension of the Muslim attack and came back only with the return of normalcy.

The king was a devout Buddhist and made donations (as known from his own inscription found at Bodh-Gaya) not only to the Ceylonese *sthaviras*, but also to the *Bhikshupandita* Śrī-Dharmarakshita, the religious preceptor of the king of Kamā, a contemporary of the powerful king Aśokachalla of Sapādalaksha (The name of Aśokachalla also occurs in this inscription.). This Dharmarakshita is known from an inscription, dated in 1813 of the Nirvāṇa era, to have come to Bodh-Gaya, to supervise the construction of a *gandha-kuṭi* of Buddha by king Purushottamasimha of Kamā. The latter beseeched the Chhinda king and Aśokachalla for the purpose of restoring the religion of Buddha which had suffered decline at the time. We have two inscriptions of the reign of Aśokachalla himself who evidently took an active interest in the improvement of the Mahābodhi establishment. The earlier one, dated in the year 51 of the *atīta-rājya* of Lakshmanasena, registers the erection of a Buddhist *vihāra* with an image of Buddha by some individuals with the assent of the king who is described as a *paramopāsaka* and a Mahāyānist. Provisions were also made for the daily offerings and lamps, but they were to be offered to the deity by the members of the Sinhalese community at Mahābodhi. The other, dated in the year 74 of the same era, records some unspecified donations by a Buddhist officer of Prince Daśaratha, the younger brother of Aśokachalla.

Buddhasena's son, Jayaśena (called Pīṭhpati and *āchārya* like his father) was also favourably disposed towards Buddhism. He donated a village to the Vajrāsana and placed the charter in the hands of the monk Maṅgalasvāmin, versed in the *Tripitaka* and a native of Ceylon, which facts suggest that the Vajrāsana establishment was then under the direct supervision of the Ceylonese monks. That the latter were in this period almost the exclusive priests of the Vajrāsana temple is confirmed not only by the inscription of Aśokachalla, dated in the year 51 (in the *atīta-rājya* of Lakshmanasena) where the donated daily-offerings were enjoined to be given by the members of the Sinhala Saṅgha but also by the account of Dharmasvāmin. 'On the outside (of the Mahābodhi temple), at the distance of an arrow shot, on each of the sides of the square wall, there were three gates, the Eastern, Western and Northern. . . . Inside the three great gates no one slept except the sacristans. There are three hundred sacristans, natives of Ceylon, who belong to the Śrāvaka school; others (schools) have no such right'.<sup>9</sup> How the Ceylonese Hinayānist monks attained a vested interest in the Vajrāsana establishment is still enigmatic. These people, as natural with their tenets, had a bitter hatred towards Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna practices and the keeper, a *śrāvaka*, of the Vajrāsana-Saṅgha-vihāra, in fact asked Dharmasvāmin to throw into the river the Mahāyāna *Ashśasāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript which he was carrying in his hand, and not to worship Khasarapaṇa who was a householder.<sup>10</sup>

Among the 'exceptionally holy objects of worship' at Vajrāsana, Dharmasvāmin

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 74.



mentions 'the Bodhi-tree, the image of Mahābodhi (i.e. image of Buddha inside the main temple), the Gandhola (Gandha-kuṭī) erected by the Dharmarāja Aśoka, the corner-tooth of the Tathāgata, the two foot-prints of the Blessed One on the empty stone throne of Śākyamuni of the 'Phrul-snañ Temple of Tibet, the stone railing erected by Ārya Nāgārjuna (this incorrect information is based evidently on the tradition current at that time<sup>11</sup>), and the Temple of the Tārā known as the Tārāvihāra'.<sup>12</sup> The last is most probably identical with the brick temple associated with Tārā outside the compound. The Mahāyānic goddess Tārā had a popular following even in this stronghold of Hinayāna Buddhism.

At the time of Dharmasvāmin's visit there were twelve *vihāras*, including the one in front of the northern gate, the number of monks in each being only about six, seven, ten or fifteen. 'The monastic cells had from the outside the shape of Stūpas (cells with domical roofs ?), and from the inside that of human dwellings. They were painted in bright white colour'.<sup>13</sup>

Towards the end of the thirteenth century the Burmese<sup>14</sup> took a special interest in the preservation and the glorification of the Mahābodhi temple. Inscriptions in Burmese characters recording occasional repairs and donations have been found here. One of these inscriptions is specially significant, as it not only gives an account of the thorough repair of the temple accomplished by the king of Burma through his agents in the last decade of the thirteenth century A.D., but also furnishes a picture of the chequered career of this unique temple from its nucleus, which is attributed to Aśoka, till its third restoration.

The temple was in use even in the fourteenth century, long after the Muslim conquest of northern India, as is evident from the records of pilgrims, inscribed on the pavement-slabs. Not long afterwards, it fell into decay and according to the *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, the queen of Chaglarāja (about the middle of the fifteenth century A.D.) of Bengal repaired the Gandhola (i.e. the Mahābodhi temple). Deserted by the Buddhists and only rarely visited by some pilgrims from distant lands, the temple was ultimately appropriated by the Śaiva Giris who founded a *maṭha* by its side about the end of the sixteenth century and obtained in the eighteenth century the grant of the village of Taradih, in which the temple is situated, from the Mughal Emperor. They had been holding it, till it was reclaimed in 1956, the Brahmanical Paṇḍās worshipping the images under the names of Brahmanical deities including those of the Pāṇḍava brothers and their mother and wife. The painting of the figure of Maheśvara (p. 63) on the outside door of the temple seen by Dharmasvāmin, no doubt, smells the growing influence of the Śaiva cult here even earlier.

<sup>11</sup> Curiously enough, the railing of Amaravati is also attributed in later records to Nāgārjuna.

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>14</sup> From a Mōn inscription (*Epigraphia Birmanica*, I, pt. II, pp. 86, 154, 163 and 164) of Prome, it appears that King Tribhuvanādityadharmarāja (end of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth century) sent a mission with funds for the restoration of the Vajrāsana temple 'destroyed by other kings'. It is likely that the additions in the form of arches (illustrated on pl. XXXI of A. Cunningham's *Mahābodhi*) in the typical contemporaneous style of Burma are the results of this foreign aid.



The present condition of the temple and its premises is the result of the thorough overhauling completed in the eighties of the nineteenth century. In recent years a museum has been established at the site to house loose sculptures and other antiquities found at the site and its neighbourhood.

### C. SARNATH

Sarnath<sup>15</sup> (lat. 25° 22' N.; long. 83° 1' E.; District Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh), 4 miles to the north of Varanasi, represents the site of the ancient Rishipatana or Mṛigadāya (variantly Mṛigadāya). The first name owes its origin to the fall (*patana*) of the bodies of five hundred Pratyeka-Buddhas (*rishis*) at this spot after their attainment of *nirvāṇa*, while the latter is derived from the legend that the king of Vārāṇasī, moved by the spirit of self-sacrifice of Bodhisattva, born as a deer named Nyagrodha-mṛiga (Banyan Deer), granted security to the herds of deer to roam freely in the wood of Sarnath. The story runs thus. Buddha, in one of his previous births, was born as a leader of a herd and was called Nyagrodha-mṛiga. He and another leader, called Branch Deer, together with their herds, were entrapped into the royal park of the king of Vārāṇasī, who was extremely fond of deer-flesh. In order to avoid random killing, the members of the herds decided to send a victim each day by casting lots. The lot having once fallen on a pregnant doe, Nyagrodha-mṛiga, who had been granted immunity before by the king, offered himself as a substitute.

Sarnath enjoys a high position in the Buddhist world and is one of the Four Great Places named by Buddha on his death-bed, as here Buddha preached his First Sermon (p. 3; photo 9). The seed of the *Saṅgha* was also sown here with the conversion of the householder Yaśa and his fifty-four friends (p. 3). Owing to the sanctity thus attached to it, the place continued to be a leading centre of Buddhism till the last days of the faith in northern India, under such names as Dharma-chakra-vihāra, Sad-dharma-chakra-vihāra and Sad-dharma-chakra-pravartana-vihāra. In consonance with its great sanctity, the relics excavated at the place are extensive, varied and rich.

The earliest remains at Sarnath date from the days of Aśoka, who erected a pillar (only the lower portion of which is now *in situ*) here and inscribed on it his Schism Edict threatening dissentient monks with expulsion from the community of monks (*Saṅgha*). The pillar has on its surface an exquisite polish. The detached magnificent capital (photo 65) is now displayed in the local museum. It consists of four components: (i) a lotus at the base; (ii) a circular abacus carved with an elephant, bull, horse and lion separated from one another by a wheel; (iii) four lions set back-to-back over the abacus; and (iv) a surmounting wheel (a few fragments recovered). The lion-part of the capital with the abacus, of superb workmanship, has now been adopted as the State crest of India, just as the insignia of the establishment—a wheel flanked by two deer symbolizing the First Sermon in the Deer-Park—became the accepted emblem of the seals of almost all

<sup>15</sup> The modern name seems to be a derivative of 'Sārāṅganātha' (lord of deer), still borne by Mahādeva installed near by. The convenient approach to Sarnath, itself a small railway-station, is from Varanasi.



the *mahāvihāras* of India (photo 70). On this pillar were inscribed in later periods two more records, one, of the Kushān period, referring to the reign of Aśvaghosha, a ruler of Kauśāmbī, and the other, of the early Gupta period, mentioning the teachers of the Sāṃmitīya sect.

Another monument attributed to Aśoka is a *stūpa* (p. 24), the ill-fated Dharmarājikā, to the south of the pillar, which was extensively despoiled in the last decade of the eighteenth century. In its core, eighteen cubits below the top, was found a sandstone box and a green marble relic-casket, the latter placed inside the former and containing a few pieces of human bone, decayed pearls, gold leaves and other jewels. The sanctity of this *stūpa* is amply borne out by the six enlargements which it successively underwent, the last addition being in the twelfth century A.D.

The last object which is ascribed to Aśoka is a monolithic railing of the Chunar sandstone, which was found buried inside the foundation of the south chapel of the Main Shrine (see below). It was originally erected either at a spot of exceptional sanctity or on the dome around the crowning *chhatra* of the *stūpa* mentioned above.

Of the vestiges of the Śuṅga period, about a dozen carved pillars, evidently forming parts of a railing, are all that have been exposed near the Main Shrine and the pillar of Aśoka.

To the Kushān period belongs a colossal image of Buddha of red sandstone standing under a stone umbrella—an import from Mathura—set up in the *chaṅkama* (promenade) of Buddha in the third year of Kanishka by the monk Bala, who made similar gifts elsewhere as well (p. 77). Two foreigners, the Great Satrap Kharapallāna and the Satrap Vanaspara, local governors of the Varanasi region, participated in this work of piety. This image along with the umbrella and also the pillars mentioned above are now exhibited in the local museum.

An apsidal structure, to the west of the pillar of Aśoka, must have been one of the early structures of the site. Above it was built a structure at a later date.

The Gupta period witnessed a phenomenal spurt in the sculptural and structural activity at Sarnath so that the place, already a holy centre of Buddhism, became an important centre of art. As has been stated above (p. 15), the Buddha-images (photos 9 and 14) of Sarnath, of which scores have been recovered, have acquired an honoured place in the history of plastic art. The expression of calm serenity, springing from a complete mental and physical discipline, and spiritual luminosity combined with grace and beauty of form in these images remain unparalleled by the products of any other schools.

Inscriptions of the Gupta and later periods refer to a shrine known as Mūla-gandhakuṭī, 'the chief shrine' of Buddha, which might have been erected at the spot of Buddha's residence at Mrigadāva. Its location has not been identified, though it is not unlikely that it is represented by the Main Shrine, the ruins of which have been laid bare by excavation. The Main Shrine, about 60 ft. square, is a massive brick structure, surrounded by a cluster of votive *stūpas*; it faces east and has in the middle of its three other outer walls small chapels, designed to contain images. The chapels projecting from three sides and the porch on the east make the exterior plan a regular cross. The base of the walls is relieved with mouldings. Though the object of worship was not found, it may be surmised that it was



an image of Buddha in *dharmachakra-pravartana-mudrā*. The 200-ft. high temple crowned by an *amalaka* seen by Hiuen Tsang and mentioned by him as enshrining a life-sized brass (bronze?) image of preaching Buddha may be no other than this Main Shrine. Hiuen Tsang, who saw fifteen hundred residents belonging to the Sāmmitīya sect (the establishment being divided into eight parts, all within one enclosure), also refers to the 70-ft. high pillar and 100-ft. high *stūpa* of Aśoka. Beyond these, it is not possible to identify the structures mentioned by him.

The approach to the court in front of the Main Shrine is flanked by myriads of structures, mostly *stūpas*. One of the *stūpas* bore within its core images of Buddha.<sup>16</sup>

The most imposing monument at Sarnath is the Dhāmekh Stūpa (photo 66), a cylindrical tower, 93 ft. in basal diameter and 143 ft. in height including the foundations. It is a solid structure with the drum of stonework and the upper part of brickwork. The drum is provided with eight arched projections, each with a niche for an image. Its exterior, of the Gupta period, is relieved with a variety of motifs including fine scroll-work, ornate and geometrical patterns and a luxuriant creeper, combining human and animal figures, rendered with consummate skill. What the *stūpa* commemorates is not known, but at a depth of 3 ft. from the top was found a stone slab with the Buddhist creed inscribed on it in characters of the sixth or seventh century A.D. Below the stonework of the drum, is the masonry of bricks of large size which possibly belonged to an earlier ruined structure.

During the next six centuries, structural activities, by way of restoration of existing buildings and erection of new ones, continued in full swing. This is proved not only by excavated remains but by inscriptions as well. Thus, a record of A.D. 1026 states that during the reign of Mahipāla I of the Pāla dynasty, two brothers restored the Dharmarājikā (*stūpa*) and the Dharma-chakra (*stūpa* or monastery) and constructed a new stone shrine under the name of Gandha-kuṭī. Another inscription records that Kumāradevi, the Buddhist queen of Govindachandra (circa A.D. 1114-54) of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty of Kanauj, built at Sarnath a monastery, which was the last great monument of the site.

Generally speaking, the monasteries of Sarnath, built and rebuilt in successive periods (there being hardly any trace of pre-Kushān monastery), are located in the northern half of the site and are separated from the religious structures, in the southern half, by a high wall. No complete plan of any monastery has been revealed by excavation, but there can be little doubt that the plan of the monasteries did not materially differ in any essential detail from those in other sites.

Mention may be made of an underground passage which originates at the western end of Kumāradevi's monastery and leads to a small sanctuary.

The images of the deities of the Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna pantheon discovered here are not very prolific and include a few forms of Tārā, Lokeśvara, Mārīchi, Siddhaikavira, Nilakanṭha, Jambhala, Vasudhārā, Śaḍaksharī Lokeśvara with Maṇidhara and Śaḍaksharī Mahāvidyā and Simhanāda Lokeśvara.

About 2 furlongs to the south of the main area is a lofty edifice (locally known as

<sup>16</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1963-64—A Review*, pp. 92 and 107 and pl. LXI.



Chaukhandī), presumably a terraced *stūpa*<sup>17</sup> with an octagonal plan at the base built over a succession of three square terraces. The outer walls of the latter have niches (for images) separated by pilasters. On its top is an octagonal tower built in the reign of Akbar to commemorate the visit of Humayun to this place.

#### D. KUŚĪNAGARA

The incidents connected with the event of the *parinirvāṇa* of Buddha in the *upavartana* (suburbs) of Kuśinagara or Kuśinārā, 'a small wattle and daub town' on the bank of the ancient Hiraṇyavati, have been described above (p. 6). As Kuśinagara was declared by Buddha himself as one of the Four Great Places which a Buddhist 'should visit with feelings of reverence and awe' (for at that place 'the Tathāgata passed finally away in that utter passing away which leaves nothing whatever to remain behind'), two extensive monastic establishments, Mahā-parinirvāṇa-vihāra and Makuṭabandhana-vihāra, the former associated with the site of his *nirvāṇa* and the latter with that of his cremation,<sup>18</sup> grew up at the place and flourished almost till the disappearance of Buddhism from northern India.

The earliest history of this centre is unknown, but according to Hiuen Tsang, Aśoka built three *stūpas* here and in the vicinity, one of them, by the side of a large brick temple with the image of Buddha 'lying with his head to the north' being above 200 ft. high even in its ruins (no doubt the *nirvāṇa-chaitya*). In front of it was a stone pillar with an inscription recording the event of the *parinirvāṇa*. The pilgrim saw a second inscribed stone pillar by the side of the *stūpa*, built by Aśoka at the spot where the relics were divided.

Of the notices of the three Chinese pilgrims, Fa-hien, Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing, that of Hiuen Tsang is elaborate. He referred to a number of *stūpas* commemorating the important events and spots connected with the *mahā-parinirvāṇa*, such as the Aśokan *stūpa* on the site of the house of Chunda, the blacksmith (p. 6), the *stūpas* built over the spots where Subhadra, the last convert, died, where Vajrapāṇi fell into a swoon at the Master's demise, where the *devas* worshipped the still body of Buddha for a week, near the spot where the coffin rested for seven days to commemorate the weeping of Mahāmāyā, Buddha's mother, and the spot where 'the dead Buddha put his feet out of the coffin to show them to Mahākāśyapa', who came last to pay homage to Buddha and without whose presence the funeral pile could not be ignited, besides the two *stūpas* near the

<sup>17</sup> Though on the whole it appears to be a *stūpa*, it is impossible to be absolutely definite as to whether it was a *stūpa* or a temple, the reason being that the top, where the shrine would have existed had it been a temple, is disturbed by the memorial erected in the reign of Akbar.

<sup>18</sup> The earlier seals of these two establishments bore their characteristic symbols, one having the coffin of Buddha between two *śāla* trees and the other a flaming funeral pyre, but in later ones these symbols were replaced by a wheel flanked by deer, the characteristic motif of Sarnath (p. 66). The sealing of a third monastery, Eraṇḍa-mahāvihāra, was found near Monastery D, while a terracotta seal-die, found here, is inscribed with the legend *Śrī-Vishvadevīpa-vihāre bhikṣu-saṅghasya* in characters of the fifth century A.D. Vishvadevīpa, no doubt, represents Vethadīpa, where sprang up one of the eight original *śāstika stūpas* (p. 7).



*nirvāṇa*-shrine, commemorating the culminating points of two *Jātakas*. A reference of the *Pan-da-na* (evidently Makutabandhana) monastery is made by I-tsing who found the religion flourishing here.

The ruins of Kuśinagara are situated near the town of Kasia (lat. 25° 44' N.; long. 83° 55' E.; District Deoria, Uttar Pradesh), 22 miles north-east of Deoria (on the main line of the North-eastern Railway) and 34 miles east of Gorakhpur, both District headquarters in Uttar Pradesh and conveniently connected with Kasia by bus, and are locally known as Māthā-kuār-kā-koṭ.

The focus of the ruins at the main site is a *stūpa* (*nirvāṇa-chaitya*) with a shrine in front (west), both standing on a platform, 9 ft. high. With a cylindrical base the *stūpa*, in its ruins, stood to a height of more than 55 ft. above the platform. On excavation, at a depth of about 14 ft. from the top, was found a circular brick chamber accommodating a copper vessel, embedded in sand and a mass of cowries. The vessel contained charcoal, cowries, precious stones, seed pearls and two copper tubes, one of which yielded ashes, a small emerald, a silver coin of Kumāragupta I (A.D. 415-55) and a tiny gold tube encased in a silver one. The mouth of the vessel was closed by a copper-plate on which was written, mostly in ink, the *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra* (p. 22) in Gupta characters. The record concluded by saying that the copper-plate (*tāmra-ṭaṭṭa*) had been deposited in the *nirvāṇa-chaitya* by one Haribala. Further down, at a depth of 34 ft. was found the circular plinth of a small *stūpa*, 9 ft. 3 in. high., with a niche on the western façade having a terracotta figure of Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*, stylistically ascribable to the first century A.D. Inside the *stūpa* were found pieces of charcoal and earth. The *nirvāṇa-chaitya* was thoroughly overhauled in 1927 out of the donation of Burmese devotees (photo 67).

The *nirvāṇa*-shrine in the front houses a colossal sandstone image of Buddha lying in state on a brick pedestal, with three mourning figures and an inscription recording the gift of the image by the *Mahāvihāra-svāmin* Haribala, no doubt the same individual as the one mentioned in the copper-plate found within the *nirvāṇa-chaitya*. The shrine was completely but clumsily restored in 1876; it was again rebuilt in 1956 on the occasion of the Buddha-Jayanti celebrations (photo 67).

Both the shrine and the platform on which it stands along with the *stūpa* had been built on earlier remains, as found during the excavation.

The other remains at the main site consist of votive *stūpas*, monasteries and miscellaneous buildings. The votive *stūpas* are clustered to the south of the main *stūpa*, but small groups occur elsewhere as well. Some of them, to the east of the *stūpa*-platform, are to be seen partially buried under it, indicating their earlier date.

The excavated monasteries, including the partially-exposed ones, number not less than eight. They follow the usual plan and, as is common, were built and re-built at different times, the earliest in the Kushān period and the latest in the tenth-eleventh century A.D. From a few objects, such as clay sealings and tablets dating from the Gupta period, it appears that some of them sprang up more or less simultaneously with the buildings of Haribala. Objects of the tenth-eleventh century A.D. in some of them, bearing evidence of the occupation of the site till that period, are also not lacking.

In spite of the record of the activities of Aśoka at Kuśinagara, nothing that is definitely



earlier than the Kushān period, has been found in the excavations. The objects of that epoch consist of coins of Kadphises II and Kanishka and a fragmentary inscription.

About a furlong to the south-west of the main site is a seated stone image of Buddha (locally called Māthā-kuār) in *bhūmi-sparsa-mudrā* in its original position but within a modern shrine built to shelter it. The early chapel, which originally housed it, formed part of a large quadrangular monastery (hardly any trace of it now visible), which, according to an inscription, was constructed during the reign of a local Kalachuri chief in about the tenth century A.D.

Nearly a mile to the east of the Māthā-kuār shrine is a colossal *stūpa* (about 50 ft. high), locally known as Rāmabhār-stūpa and believed to represent the spot of the cremation of Buddha. Surrounded by shrines and votive *stūpas*, its plinth is 155 ft. in diameter at the base and is built in two or more terraces, over which rises the drum, 112 ft. in diameter. Excavation into its core did not yield any relics, though myriads of clay tablets with the usual Buddhist creed were found around it. The *stūpa*, which, no doubt, was an object of high sanctity, underwent earlier repairs and renovations.

#### E. RAJGIR

Rajgir (lat. 25° 2' N.; long. 85° 26' E.; District Patna, Bihar), 62 miles south-east of Patna and connected with it both by road and railway-line, still preserves the old name Rājagriha, the ancient capital of Magadha (South Bihar), one of the sixteen Mahā-janapadas that came into existence before the birth of Buddha. The place was variously known as Vasumatī, Bārhadrathapura, Kuśāgrapura and Girivraja (lit. enclosure of hills). The last is the most appropriate descriptive name, for its situation in an extensive valley surrounded by hills on all sides with narrow passes in between is as strategic for an ideal capital in ancient days as it is picturesque.

During the days of Buddha, the kingdom of Magadha was fast rising to power and prosperity under its rulers Bimbisāra and his son Ajātasatru; its capital attained great importance as a political and religious centre during the period. Bimbisāra was greatly attached to Buddha. It is said that he was killed by Ajātasatru; but the latter, too, came under the influence of Buddha later on.

Buddha spent many years of his life at Rājagriha which was the chief centre of propagation in the early years of his spiritual administration. Many were the places here associated with his life. Buddha's admiration of the city and its environs is summed up in the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, where he says, 'Delightful is Rājagriha; delightful is the Grīdhra-kūta hill; delightful is Gautama-nyagrodha; delightful is Chaura-prapāta; delightful is the Saptaparnī cave on the side of the Vaibhāra; delightful is Kālaśilā on the Rishigiri side; delightful is Sarpa-śaundika-prāgbhāra in Śītavana; delightful is Tapodārāma; delightful is the Kalandaka lake in Veṇuvana; delightful is the mango-grove of Jīvaka; delightful is the Deer-park in Mardakukshi.' It was in this capital, Devadatta, both his cousin and rival, made murderous attempts on his life (p. 6), by letting loose the infuriated elephant (photo 17), by hiring assassins (photo 18) and by hurling a rock at him.

Rājagriha was equally sacred to the Jains. Not only was it regarded as the birth-place



of Muni Suyrata, the twentieth Tirthaṅkara, but it was in this city and its suburbs Mahāvīra, the last Tirthaṅkara and contemporary of Buddha, spent many a rainy season.

After Buddha's death, Ajātaśatru consecrated his share of relics inside a *stūpa* built for the purpose. Soon afterwards, the First Buddhist Council under Mahākāśyapa was held at Rājagriha in a hall in front of the caves known as Saptaparnī to rehearse and canonize Buddha's scattered sayings relating to *Dharma* (doctrines) and *vinaya* (disciplinary rules of the Order). Rājagriha, after Ajātaśatru, lost its premier position with the shifting of the capital to Pāṭaliputra (modern Patna) during the reign of Udayabhadra or Udayin, Ajātaśatru's successor.

Two centuries later, Aśoka, it is stated, erected here a *stūpa* and a pillar with an elephant-capital.

Not much is known about the subsequent history of Buddhism at Rājagriha. When Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang visited the place in the fifth and seventh centuries respectively, they did not find the religion in a flourishing condition. The latter found many Digambaras on the Vipula (modern Vaibhara) hill, where formerly there had been Buddhist edifices including a *stūpa*. But that the faith had its adherents till the beginning of the Muslim occupation of the land is proved not only by the discovery of a few sculptures, votive *stūpas* and inscribed terracotta plaques of the tenth-eleventh century A.D., but by the testimony of the Tibetan monk Dharmasvāmin (p. 63), who, during his stay at Rājagriha in A. D. 1235, studied many doctrines with the *Mahāpaṇḍita* Yaśomitra. When Dharmasvāmin visited the Gridhrakūṭa, it was surrounded by forests infested with carnivorous animals and contained on its peak a brick *stūpa* with 'terraced steps' and the ruins of a building of large bricks.

The valley and its neighbourhood are studded with ancient remains, which is but natural, as the place not only had direct associations with lives of Buddha and Mahāvīra, but was once the capital of Magadha. Exposed Buddhist monuments are rather scanty, partly due to gradual decay and denudation and mostly on account of inadequate excavation. Most of the sites mentioned in the Buddhist texts have been located with the help of the directions and distances given by Chinese pilgrims, but the identifications are not always beyond doubt.

Immediately to the north of the valley are a few mounds which have been variously identified with those built by Ajātaśatru and Aśoka. A trial excavation of the high mound to the west of the new citadel of Ajātaśatru led to the discovery of late *stūpas*. The Karaṇḍa-nivāpa has been identified with a tank to the south of the Inspection Bungalow. The mound near it is taken to be the site of the monastery of Venuvana (Bamboo-grove) which is about half a mile to the north of the northern gate of the high stone fortification encompassing the valley. It is said that King Bimbisāra once passed a night in this monastery with Buddha, as he was late while taking his bath in the Tapodā (the stream, formed by the waters of the hot springs, now called Sarasvatī) and found the city-gate closed. The Tapodārāma must have been close to the hot springs.

On the northern scarp of the Vaibhara hill there is a group of natural caves, identified with Saptaparnī, in front of which, in a hall constructed by Ajātaśatru, was held the First Buddhist Council, attended by five hundred monks.



In the south-eastern corner of the hill-girt valley was situated the monastery of Jivakāmravana, built by a famous physician called Jivaka in his own mango-grove for the use of Buddha and his following. Recent excavation here has brought to light the enclosure-wall together with foundations of a few large elliptical halls and subsidiary oblong rooms, all built of rubble. The plan (fig. 8, p. 37) of this complex (p. 36), if it was the monastery of Jivaka, does not conform to the usual plan of Buddhist monasteries; this may be due to its early date, when the monastic plan had not yet been standardized.

The Grīdhṛakūṭa (Vultures' peak), a favourite resort of Buddha, is on the Chhatha hill, approached by a stone-laid path, supposed to have been built by Bimbisāra, when he wanted to call on Buddha residing on the Grīdhṛakūṭa. Here there are two natural caves where Buddha lived: they must have been the scene of the dastardly attempt on his life by his cousin Devadatta (above, p. 6). Higher above are a few structures of later dates (photo 68). The site has yielded a number of antiquities including plaques with the Buddhist creed. The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript of A.D. 1015 in the Cambridge University Library (ms. no. Add. 1643) contains a painting of *Prajñāpāramitā* of the Grīdhṛakūṭa-parvata. Another painted illustration of this goddess of the Grīdhṛakūṭa occurs in a manuscript, dated A.D. 1071, preserved in the Asiatic Society of Bengal Library (ms. no. A. 15).

The land between Gaya and Rajgir and its environs—the heart of ancient Magadha—teem with Buddhist ruins, as Magadha was the centre of Buddhism from its earliest almost to the latest days. Apart from Bodh-Gaya, Nālandā and Kurkihar, described elsewhere (pp. 60-66, 85-89 and 89 f.), mention may here be made of Jethian (ancient Yashṭivana, 6 miles south-west of Rājagṛiha), sanctified by the presence of Buddha (p. 4) and where Aśoka is said to have built a *stūpa*, and Giriya, situated on the outer face of the eastern hills of Rajgir. Giriya, identified with the site of Indrasāla-guhā where Śakra once is said to have visited Buddha, contains among other ruins, a cylindrical brick *stūpa* (photo 38), 28 ft. in diameter and 21 ft. in height, standing on a 14-ft. high plinth.

#### F. VAIŚĀLĪ

Vaiśālī, the capital of the Lichchhavi clan, was one of the largest cities at the time of Buddha, who visited it several times and stayed at some of its shrines and *chaityas* like Bahuputra-chaitya, Chāpāla-chaitya and Mahāvana-kūṭāgāra-śālā. It was here that Buddha was offered a bowl of honey by a monkey (photo 15), which incident was reckoned as one of the eight important events of Buddha's life (p. 5). The spot, marking the miracle, was honoured, according to Hsien Tsang, with a *stūpa* located by the side of the Markatahrada (p. 75). During one of his visits, not long before his death, Buddha accepted the gift of a mango-grove from the famous courtesan Āmrāpālī. After his death the Lichchhavis received a share of the relics of Buddha and enshrined it in a *stūpa* near Vaiśālī (p. 7). It is stated that another *stūpa* near the place contained half the relics of Ānanda, the other half being buried at Rājagṛiha.

The Second Buddhist Council under King Kālāśoka or Kākavarṇin took place at Vaiśālī, a century after the death of Buddha in connection with the ten rules of



discipline adopted by the eastern monks living at Vaiśālī and Pāṭaliputra against the protest of the westerners residing at Kauśāmbī, Pāṭheyya and Avanti (western Malwa).<sup>19</sup>

The *chaityas* (including sacred trees) of this place were famous by the second century B.C. as borne out by labelled reliefs of the sanctuaries and trees of Vaiśālī on a stele (photo 69) from Amaravati (p. 203) which depicts some of the incidents of his last journey from Vaiśālī to Kuśinagara.<sup>20</sup> The monks of the Mahāvāna monastery attended the consecration of the Mahāthūpa built by Duṭṭhagāmaṇī of Ceylon.

Both Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang visited the place. The latter saw a large number of Buddhist monuments, including the *stūpa* which had been erected by the Lichchhavis and which had been opened up by Aśoka for its relic-contents (p. 9) and also the *stūpa* built by Aśoka himself.

From the finds of images it may be presumed that Buddhism survived in this place up to the twelfth century A.D. The image of Tārā of this place was particularly famous as evident from a miniature painting of Tārā of Vaiśālī (*Tarabhuktā Vaiśālī-Tārā*) illustrated on a manuscript of the eleventh century.<sup>21</sup> Dharmasvāmin, who, on his way to Vajrāsana from Pa-ta, the capital of Tirhut, passed through the town of Vaiśālī, which was deserted at that time due to the apprehension of Muslim attack, did not refer to any Buddhist establishment in the country except to a female lay-supporter and 'a miraculous stone image of the Ārya Tārā with her head and body turned towards the left, foot placed flat, and the right foot turned sideways, the right hand in the *vara-mudrā* and the left hand holding the symbol of the Three Jewels in front of the heart. The image was known to be endowed with great blessing, and the mere beholding of the goddess' face relieved devotees from distress'.<sup>22</sup>

Basarh (lat. 25° 59' N.; long. 85° 7' E.; District Muzaffarpur, Bihar), 22 miles south-west of Muzaffarpur in northern Bihar, represents the ancient Vaiśālī. While no Buddhist remains are noticed within the excavated portions of the ruined fort known as Rājā-Visāl-kā-garh, they are met with outside it. Thus, within 300 yards to its south-west is a brick mound (*stūpa*?), substantial even in its ruined condition. At Kolhua, 2 miles to the north-west of the fort, stands a pillar with a lotus capital and a cable necking upon which is an oblong abacus surmounted by a lion. Though without any inscriptions of Aśoka, the design and craftsmanship of the pillar and its capping members suggest strongly its Mauryan origin. Adjacent to it is a large brick *stūpa*. An image of Buddha of the late Pāla period, found in a neighbouring field, is enshrined at present on the top of the *stūpa*. From its proximity to the pillar, it has been guessed that the nucleus of the *stūpa* dated from the time of Aśoka. A pond near by has been identified, on the

<sup>19</sup> The controversy led to the division of the *Saṅgha* in two camps; the easterners came to be known as Mahāsāṅghikas and Āchāriyavāda, and the more orthodox westerners Theravāda (Sthaviravāda).

<sup>20</sup> *Ancient India*, nos. 20 & 21, 1964 & 1965, pp. 168 ff.

<sup>21</sup> A. Foucher, *Étude sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de l'Inde d'après des documents nouveaux*, Pt. II (Paris, 1900), pl. VII, 1. The same painting bears the representation of the monkey's offer of honey to Buddha by the side of a temple containing the standing figure of Tārā.

<sup>22</sup> G. Roerich and A. S. Altekar, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin* (Patna, 1959), p. 61.



basis of the bearing and distance given by Hiuen Tsang, as the Markaṭa-hrada, excavated by the monkeys for the use of Buddha.

The recent excavation of an unpretentious low *stūpa*, about half a mile to the north-west of the fort, yielded interesting results (p. 23). Originally a mud structure with thin layers of cloddy clay, 25 ft. in diameter, the *stūpa* underwent four enlargements, in all of which burnt bricks were used, the third increasing the diameter to 40 ft. and the fourth being in the form of a buttress supporting the third. In the centre of the original *stūpa*, seemingly lying in the midst of soil anciently disturbed by a trench, was a relic-casket of soapstone containing a small quantity of ashy earth, a piece of gold leaf, two glass beads, a small conch and a copper punch-marked coin. A curious feature about this *stūpa* is the presence of *āyaka*-like projections at four directions as in the *stūpas* of the lower reaches of the Krishna.

The original *stūpa* was, no doubt, a very old one, may be pre-Mauryan. From its primitive features and from the fact that a trench had been driven into its core in old times, it has been held that the *stūpa* is no other than the one erected by the Lichchhavis over their share of the relics (p. 7) of Buddha, the trench being the one that was excavated by Aśoka to reach the relics, some of which, according to Hiuen Tsang, were left in their original position by Aśoka. Further, the situation of the *stūpa* has been thought to answer to Hiuen Tsang's location of the *stūpa* built by the Lichchhavis. If this identification is correct, the *stūpa* would be the earliest *stūpa* as yet discovered, but it must be added that the identification cannot be regarded as firmly established.

The two mounds in a north-south alignment near the Maurya pillar and measuring respectively 183 and 179 ft. in basal diameter and 25 and 23 ft. in height were found, on excavation, to be the ruins of mud *stūpas*. The northern one yielded several copper utensils, one of them with relics, besides an earthen bowl and dish. Evidently, it was both a *śārīrika* and *pāribhogika* *stūpa* of a Buddhist teacher.

About 30 miles north-west of Vaiśālī is Kesariya, near which are the ruins of an establishment consisting of an imposing brick *stūpa* and the remains of a monastery.

### G. ŚRĀVASTĪ

Śrāvastī, on the bank of the Achirāvati (modern Rapti), was the capital of the kingdom of Kosala (Oudh). During the days of Buddha its prosperity reached the peak under the powerful ruler Prasenajit. In the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* Śrāvastī is mentioned as one of the six important cities (others being Champā, Rājagṛiha, Sāketa, Kauśāmbī and Vārāṇasī) where Buddha had a large following. Some of the well-known *bhikṣuṇīs* hailed from this place.

Mention has been made above (p. 4) of the establishment of a monastery at Jetavana<sup>23</sup> in the vicinity of Śrāvastī by Sudatta-Anāthapiṇḍika for the residence of Buddha. With this monastery, named Anāthapiṇḍikārāma, as the nucleus, Jetavana

<sup>23</sup> Pre-Christian reliefs from Bharhut, Amaravati and Sanchi depict the purchase of Jetavana and foundation of Buddha's residences there (photo 13).



developed into a large establishment and a favourite resort of Buddha. Some of the structures bore special names, e.g. Mahā-gandha-kuṭī, meant for the exclusive use of Buddha, Karerī-maṇḍala-mālā (probably also known as Karerī-kuṭī), Kosamba-kuṭī and Chandana-mālā; to these should be added Salaḷaghara, erected by Prasenajit himself, who had become an admirer of Buddha. One of the reliefs on the railing of the *stūpa* from Bharhut depicts the king's ceremonial drive to visit Buddha (p. 95).

At a short distance from Jetavana, to the north-east, was erected another notable monastery, Pūrvārāma, so called for its situation to the east of the city, by a pious lady Viśākhā, daughter-in-law of Migāra, a rich banker of Śrāvastī. Viśākhā was a lay devotee of Buddha and succeeded in persuading the banker, who was of the Ājīvika faith, to become the follower of Buddha, for which act, she came to be fondly called Migāra-mātā (mother of Migāra). During one of her visits to Jetavana to listen to Buddha's discourses she once dropped inadvertently her costly jewelled necklace. When she got it back, she lost the desire of wearing it again. Instead, she sold it off and utilized the amount in building a sumptuous monastery, which came to be known as Pubbārāma-Migāra-mātupāsāda and which was also hallowed by the presence of Buddha. The third important monastery was Rājakārāma, built at the instance of Prasenajit, for the residence of the nuns, one of them being Sumanā, sister of the king. Queen Mallikā herself built Mallikārāma, a hall, for the rendezvous of the wanderers.

Buddha spent the largest number of *varshās* at Jetavana and delivered most of his important sermons here. A notable episode in Buddha's life during one of his stays here was the Great Miracle of Śrāvastī (p. 5; photo 14), for which act the place came to be venerated as one of the Eight Great Places connected with the Master's life. Another important incident was the conversion of the notorious robber Aṅgulimāla, who used to kill people and cut a finger off each person for a garland. To make up the required number of fingers the wicked robber intended to kill his own mother when Buddha converted him.

Like all other contemporary Buddhist centres, Jetavana partook of the patronage of Aśoka. Hiuen Tsang saw at the eastern gate of the Jetavana-vihāra two pillars of Aśoka, the left one crowned by a wheel and the right one by an ox, and a *stūpa* of Aśoka enshrining the relics of Buddha. The *Divyāvadāna* mentions Aśoka's pilgrimage to Jetavana and his worship at the *stūpas*, erected in memory of Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, Mahākāśyapa and Ānanda. The *Mahāvamsa* speaks of a party of sixty thousand monks, under Mahāthera Piyadassi, having gone from the Jetavana-establishment to Ceylon and attended the consecration of the Mahāthūpa by Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. Under the Kuruāns the place seems to have been particularly prosperous, as is evident from the existence of a number of relics of that age.

When Fa-hien, who mentioned the earliest effigy of Buddha in sandal-wood in the Jetavana monastery, visited the place, Pūrvārāma had already been in ruins. By the seventh century, however, decay had progressively set in, for Hiuen Tsang saw that most of the buildings had fallen into decay. There were only a few monks belonging to the Sāmmītiya sect. Nevertheless, the discovery of Buddhist images like Lokanātha, Simhanāda Lokeśvara, Tārā and Jambhala, some with inscriptions, proves that activities continued till the twelfth century, to which period belong two inscriptions—one, dated A.D. 1119,



recording the foundation of a monastery by Vidyādhara, the converted minister of the Gāhaḍavāla king Madanapāla of Kanauj and the other recording the gift of villages by his son Govindachandra. After this the place gradually sank into oblivion.

The ruins of Jetavana are situated in village Saheth (a survival of the name of Śrāvastī) in District Gonda, Uttar Pradesh. To its north-east, about 500 yards away, and separated by it by a low-lying land, which may represent an ancient channel of the Rapti, are the ruins of the fortified city of Śrāvastī in village Maheth, District Bahraich. Saheth-Maheth (lat. 27° 30' N.; long. 82° 2' E.) can conveniently be reached from Balarampur (a town on the Gonda-Gorakhpur line of the North-eastern Railway), the distance being only 11 miles.

The remains at Jetavana lie within an irregular enclosure-wall. They have been subjected to excavations many times, with the result that remnants of temples, *stūpas* and monasteries, located without any arrangement, have been exposed. The earliest available relics consist of a few Kushān structures and images; an image of the Mathura workshop was set up on the promenade of Buddha for the teachers of the Sarvāstivāda sect in Kosamba-kuṭī by the *bhikṣu* Bala, who is known to have dedicated another image also at Sarnath (p. 67) in the reign of Kanishka.

Of the temples, the largest, Temple 2, is believed, without much reason, to stand on the site of the original Gandha-kuṭī erected by Anāthapiṇḍika, though its lowest exposed part belongs only to the Gupta period. Located within an oblong enclosure-wall, 115 ft. long and 89 ft. wide, it consists of a sanctum and a *mandapa*. Another structure around the shrine, probably the plinth of a temple, had a decorated exterior and has been ascribed to the Gupta period.

From the fact that Bala's image, mentioned above, was found near Temple 3 (built on the spot of an earlier temple) that temple is held to have been built on the site of the original Kosamba-kuṭī. The temple is now completely ruined, only the shells of the shrine and *mandapa* having survived. In front of the temple are two solid brick terraces, supposed to mark the site of Buddha's promenade.

Temple 1 (photo 71), situated within the courtyard of a large monastery of about the tenth century A.D., has the same plan of the sanctum and *mandapa*. Temples 11 and 12 have the unusual plan of three rooms in a row with a narrow verandah in front and a *pradakṣhiṇa-paṭha* around the central chamber. Temple 12, with several projections, however, has a porch.

The monasteries of Jetavana have the normal plan of Buddhist monasteries. They are, generally speaking, early mediaeval in date, an exception being Monasteries F and G, contiguous to and contemporaneous with each other, in the former of which was found a hoard of coins of the Kushān kings. Of the other early monasteries only stray walls are met with below later structures.

Mention may be made of Temple and Monastery 19, which had its origin in the Gupta period, as testified by a clay tablet with the Buddhist creed in Gupta characters. It was renovated in the tenth century, to which period belong several images, and finally reconstructed in the eleventh-twelfth century. An interesting find of the last period is a copper-plate charter, dated A.D. 1130, of the Gāhaḍavāla ruler Govindachandra, recording the grant of villages to the monks of the Jetavana-mahāvihāra.



Stūpas 17 and 18, adjacent to each other, deserve special mention, as their beginnings seem to go back to the Kushān age, though their original shapes were covered up by later structures. Stūpa 17 is remarkable for the fact that the transition from its square plinth (21 ft. 6 in. square) to the circular drum was cleverly effected by means of a series of offsets at the corners rising in concentric curves. Enshrined in it, at a depth of 7 ft., was an earthen pot with a bead of gold, two pieces of thin gold wire and a bead and a bezel, both of crystal.

About 5 ft. below the top of Stūpa 18 was a relic-chamber with an earthen bowl bearing a short dedicatory inscription in Kushān characters and containing fragments of bone, a large number of beads of gold and semiprecious stones and large pearls.

Stūpa 5 had a varied history. It appears that originally a *stūpa* built on a terrace, it was converted into a shrine and was finally made into a *stūpa* again. Similarly, Stūpa H was reconstructed several times. Stūpa 8 had two periods of construction, the earlier with a circular plan and the later square having a moulded facing and a shallow projection. Inside the later *stūpa* was found the lower portion of an image of Bodhisattva which had a Kushān inscription, recording its manufacture by a Mathura sculptor and dedication in Jetavana by two brothers. A second inscription—Buddhist creed in characters of the ninth or tenth century A.D.—on this very image was added presumably at the time of its deposit inside the later phase. Stūpa 9, a mediaeval structure by the side of Stūpa 8, yielded an image of Buddha. The inscription on its pedestal in late Kushān characters records its gift by one Sihadeva of Sāketa.

Within Maheth, the fortified city of Śrāvastī, the ruins of two massive brick structures, known as Pakkī-kuṭī and Kachchī-kuṭī, have been regarded as representing respectively the *stūpa* erected on the spot where Aṅgulimāla was converted and where the *stūpa* of Anāthapiṇḍika stood. The Buddhist association of Kachchī-kuṭī, which contains structural remains of different periods beginning with the Kushān, is doubtful except for the existence of two circular plinths, which might be remnants of *stūpas*, partly below the earlier phase of the plinth of the Kachchī-kuṭī. The Pakkī-kuṭī did not yield anything suggestive of its religious affiliation. Built on a high plinth or platform, the elaborate structure, bereft of its superstructure, is interesting on account of the central edifice being shaped like an elliptical structure with a central projection on the east side for accommodating a vestibule or passage. Hoey was inclined to regard it as 'a later building or the repaired remnants of a later building raised on the site of the Old Hall of the Law' mentioned by the Chinese pilgrim.

Outside the precincts of Jetavana and Śrāvastī, less than three quarters of a mile to the south of the southern city-wall of the latter, lies a group of three ruined structures (believed to be *stūpas*), locally known as Panahiān-jhār, Kharahuān-jhār and Oṛā-jhār. The first *stūpa* is a circular brick structure with a diameter of 54 ft. In its core was a relic-receptacle, consisting of an oblong sandstone slab incised with the motif of a full-blown lotus; inside the cup-like cavity in the centre of the lotus were found pieces of bone, some gold leaves, rock-crystal, circular laminae of silver and an oblong silver punch-marked coin. The aperture was closed by a second slab. The second structure, also circular, with a diameter of 105 ft., is made of three concentric brick



walls, the intervening spaces being filled in with clay; it contained nothing in its core. The third brick edifice, the largest in the neighbourhood, has a circumference of about 1800 ft. and a height of nearly 50 ft. and had at its top a small *tri-ratha* structure (probably a platform), resting on the ruins of an extensive earlier brick structure with a cell-foundation, the core of which has not been examined for relics.

### H. PIPRAHWA

Piprahwa (lat. 27° 26' 30" N.; long. 83° 7' 50" E.; District Basti, Uttar Pradesh) is rich in Buddhist remains, which have, however, not been properly handled and documented due to the incomplete and amateurish excavations conducted by W. C. Peppé<sup>24</sup> and P. C. Mukherji<sup>25</sup> in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Of the Maurya period was the largest *stūpa* of Piprahwa, partially exposed by Peppé who sank a shaft through its centre with the object of finding out the relics within it. At a depth of 10 ft. from the solid top of the mound was found a small broken soapstone vase full of clay in which were embedded some beads, crystal pieces, gold ornaments, cut stars, etc. A central circular pipe-like hole (full of clay), which started 10 ft. below the summit, descended down to a depth of 2 ft. with a diameter of 1 ft., when it contracted to 4 in. till it reached the bottom-level of a sandstone coffer, where it expanded into an oblong, 17 in. × 5 in., to a depth of one brick and then resuming its circular form, 4 in. in diameter, ended with the brickwork, nearly 2 ft. below the bottom-level of the box. The hole was encircled by bricks, moulded or roughly cut into the required shape. The oblong probably served as an indicator to the coffer which lay 1 ft. 9½ in. away from the edge of the former and 2 ft. 7½ in. to the east of the centre of the hole. The hole<sup>26</sup> most probably was intended for marking the centre to facilitate the laying of the brick courses in circular rings.

Fitted closely to the flange of the stone coffer, 4 ft. 5 in. long at the base, 2 ft. 9½ in. wide at the base and 2 ft. 2 in. high (together with the fitting lid), was its lid fractured into four pieces. The lid had four roughly semicircular projections, two each on the longer sides, for easy lifting. Inside the chest were: (i) a steatite vase, 7½ in. high and 4½ in. in maximum diameter; (ii) a similar but inscribed vase (photo 35) of the same material, 6 in. high and 4½ in. in diameter; (iii) a steatite *lotā*-shaped vessel (its close fitting lid lying apart), 5½ in. high (without lid) and 5½ in. in maximum diameter; (iv) a round casket, also of steatite, 3½ in. in maximum diameter and 2½ in. high; and (v) an exquisitely-polished crystal casket (photo 34), 4½ in. in maximum diameter and 4½ in. high (together with its cover), the latter's cover lying apart. The handle of the last was in the shape of a hollow fish stuffed with seven gold bands having gold granulated

<sup>24</sup> W. C. Peppé, 'The Piprahwa Stūpa, containing relics of Buddha', *Journ. Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1898, pp. 573-78.

<sup>25</sup> P. C. Mukherji, *A Report on a Tour of Exploration of the Antiquities in the Tarai, Nepal* (Calcutta, 1901), pp. 43-47.

<sup>26</sup> A central hole was also noticed in the Aśoka *stūpa* (which stands in front of the lower portion of an Aśoka pillar) at Gotihawa (District Taulihawa); cf. P. C. Mukherji, *op. cit.*, p. 32.



six-petalled flowers and gold circular frames attached to them, and several tiny beads in paste. Besides these, there were wooden and silver vessels reduced to pieces. Numbering several hundreds, the contents of these vases were both rich and varied and included, apart from pieces of bone, gold leaves impressed with various symbols like *svastika*, *tri-ratnas*, triangle-headed standard, etc., impressions of two female figures on gold leaf, figures of animals like lion and elephant in gold leaf, gold and silver flowers and stars, a tiny amulet-like gold box, gold *tri-ratnas*, a gold disc impressed with profuse connected spirals, plain gold bars, rolls of gold leaves, numerous pearls, with or without perforations, a carnelian bird, a malachite bird,<sup>27</sup> delicately-fashioned leaves,<sup>28</sup> seed-vessels, *tri-ratnas* and flowers in semiprecious minerals, fragments of coral, beads of various shapes in gold, silver, semiprecious minerals and coral, cut semiprecious stones, pieces of mica and a spirally-rolled copper wire.<sup>29</sup>

The most important, however, is the inscription on the lid of the smaller steatite vase (photo 35) which reads as follows:

*sukiti-bhātinām sa-bhagīṇikanām sa-puta-dalanām iyaṁ salīla-nidhane Budhasa bhagavate saṅghānām.*

This inscription has been variously translated as: 'This relic-shrine of divine Buddha (is the donation) of the Śākya Sukiti-brothers (i.e. either "of Sukiti's brothers" or "of Sukiti and his brothers"), associated with their sisters, sons and wives',<sup>30</sup> or 'This shrine for relics of the Buddha, the August One, is that of the Śākyas, the brethren of the Distinguished One, in association with their sisters, and with their children and their wives',<sup>31</sup> and 'Of the brethren of the Well-famed One, together with (their) little sisters (and) together with (their) children and wives, this (is) a deposit of relics; (namely) of the kinsmen of Buddha, the Blessed One'.<sup>32</sup> According to the first two interpretations, the relics are those of Buddha himself, while the third would mean that they were of Buddha's kinsmen and their sisters, wives and children (who had been slaughtered by Viḍūḍabha).

A pre-Aśokan date has been claimed by some for the inscription in view of the absence of the signs for long medial vowels, though the characters are similar to those of the edicts of Aśoka.

Though the excavator has furnished a remarkable account of the core, very little is said about the outer form. The *stūpa* was built of bricks, 16 (or 15) in. × 10½ in. (or 10 in.) × 3 in. arranged in concentric circles, layer over layer, the mortar being clay. The total diameter of the *stūpa* at the ground level (which is the same as the level of the ground inside the *stūpa* below the last course) has been recorded as 116 ft., the diameter at the point (8 ft. below the summit), where the vertical walls were well-defined, was noted as 62 ft. The height of the *stūpa* from the ground-level to the extant top was

<sup>27</sup> Both the birds had each a copper wire fixed to their partially-perforated bases.

<sup>28</sup> Some of the leaves had a perforated base through which ran a copper wire.

<sup>29</sup> The coffer, the reliquaries and a representative collection of the antiquities are in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

<sup>30</sup> *Journ. Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1898, p. 388.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 588, foot-note 1.

<sup>32</sup> *Journ. Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1906, p. 150.



21.65 ft. This information is not sufficient to present an idea about the shape of the *stūpa* and the elements below the dome.

According to P. C. Mukherji, who made some scrapings around the *stūpa*, the diameter at the middle height was 63 ft. 6 in., the diameter of the entire *stūpa* being 90 ft. 6 in.

There is some difference between the description of P.C. Mukherji and his published drawing.<sup>23</sup> This calls for a thorough excavation of the *stūpa*, which will, no doubt, throw light on the form of the original *stūpa* and the later enlargements, if any. This is absolutely necessary, as our knowledge about the Aśokan *stūpa* is rather hazy due to the *stūpas* of Sanchi and Sarnath having been engulfed by later enlargements.

Nearly 50 ft. south of the *stūpa* was a quadrangular brick monastery, 81 ft. square, with small cells on four sides of a courtyard. The corner cells were comparatively long, being about 18 ft.  $\times$  8 ft.

About 80 ft. north of the *stūpa* were the ruins of another quadrangular brick structure, partially exposed. It had a portico, about 30 ft. long and 11 ft. 6 in. wide, facing east. Around the brick-paved courtyard, 36 ft. 6 in.  $\times$  33 ft., was a verandah, about 7 ft. 6 in. broad. The floor of the cell in the north-east corner was found paved with square bricks.

To the east-north-east of the *stūpa*, at a distance of about 88 ft., were the remains of a large brick quadrangular monastery, 148 ft. (east-west)  $\times$  135 ft. (north-south), with an entrance-porch on the west facing the *stūpa* and about thirty cells arrayed around the courtyard. The outer walls were 6 ft. wide, the inner being about 4 ft. The walls of the cells were plastered with mud. Flanking the entrance, 7 ft. 7½ in. wide, were wooden jambs. The cells had wooden doors. Below the bottom level of the doors, the walls of the cells descended down to 8 ft. where came into view the double projection, below which the foundation was more than 3 ft. deep. The extraordinary depth of the walls was perhaps due to the existence of an earlier monastery. According to P. C. Mukherji, there were crypts below the floor-level of the monastery, which had been at least double-storeyed. Peppé noticed several sizes of bricks, some conforming to those of the *stūpa*; there were also arch bricks. This monastery was destroyed by fire, as proved by pieces of burnt wood in various parts of the building. The monastery yielded coins of the Mitra dynasty (?) and early Kushān kings,<sup>24</sup> besides iron objects like spear-head, framework for a door or window, spike and nail.

Near the south-east corner of the monastery, at a distance of about 64 ft., was reported a well, 3 ft. 10 in. in inner diameter and 2 ft. in thickness, beyond which was an outer circular wall, 17 ft. 3 in. and 20 ft. 3 in. respectively in internal and external diameters. These two walls were connected by two cross walls, 4 ft. 5 in. long.

Apart from these, there are remains of other structures around the place. There are also mounds near the Sisva tank, about two furlongs east of the *stūpa*, and in the neighbouring village of Ganwari, the latter containing remains of habitation of early historical period as well.

<sup>23</sup> P. C. Mukherji, *op. cit.*, pl. XXVII, fig. 2.

<sup>24</sup> *An. Prog. Rep., Arch. Surv., North-western Provinces and Oudh Circle* for the year ending 30th June 1899, p. 4.



Extensive excavation is needed in the area around the *stūpa* for the identity or otherwise of Kapilavastu. The inscription on the relic-vase coupled with Piprahwa's correspondence with Fa-hien's bearing and distance of Kapilavastu in relation to Lumbini (p. 58) which is only 9 miles eastward raises a strong presumption for Piprahwa and its surrounding villages like Ganwari being the site of Kapilavastu.

### I. KAUSĀMBĪ

Kausāmbī, the capital of Vatsa, with Udayana as the king, was one of the six important cities of northern India in the time of Buddha. It was mainly through the efforts of the three leading bankers of the city—Ghoshita, Kukkuṭa and Pāvārika—that the religion found a strong footing here. On one occasion when Buddha was staying at Jetavana, these three merchants went in a body to invite Buddha to their place. When Buddha agreed, each of them built a retreat to receive him with his following. Thus came into existence Ghoshitārāma, Kukkuṭārāma and Pāvārikāmbavana (Pāvārika's mango-grove). A fourth lodging in or in the vicinity of Kausāmbī was the Badarikārāma, while a fifth, a *vihāra*, was erected by Uttara, an wood-carver of Udayana.

The king, at first hostile towards the new religion, became later friendly towards Buddha at the instance of one of his queens, Sāmāvatī, a foster-daughter of Ghoshita and a lay devotee of Buddha. His son Bodhi was a firm believer in the faith.

Among the retreats, the Ghoshitārāma, which was graced by Buddha on more than one occasion, played a leading role. It was in this monastery, too, that the first schism in the *Saṅgha* broke out (p. 5). The differences were patched up only when Buddha left the monastery out of disgust and lay devotees began to show their disrespect and even refused alms. This forced concord, however, failed to heal the wound permanently. Many of Buddha's direct disciples, including Śāriputra and Ānanda, spent some time in this *vihāra*.

That the establishment was not purged entirely of the centrifugal tendencies and disruptions is evident from the promulgation of an ordinance by Aśoka against schism which forms the subject-matter of the text of an edict on the pillar erected by the emperor here. His second queen, Chāruvāki, is known from an inscription to have made here several benefactions like the gifts of a mango-grove, a garden and an alm-house. Aśoka is credited by Hiuen Tsang with the construction of a *stūpa* inside the Ghoshitārāma and a second near the Dragon's cave in the neighbourhood of Kausāmbī.

The colony very soon swelled in numbers. It is stated in the *Mahāvamsa* that thirty thousand monks headed by Urudhammarakkhita of the Ghoshitārāma attended the foundation of the Mahāthūpa at Anurādhapura (Ceylon) by King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi (first century B.C.)

In the third year of the reign of Kanishka, Buddhāmītra, a nun and a disciple of the monk Bala (pp. 67 and 77), installed images of Bodhisattva of the Mathura workshop at this place.

The establishment continued to flourish under the aegis of the Maghas and later on the Guptas, till it suffered serious reverses at the hands of the Hūṇas under their anti-Buddhist chief Toramāṇa (circa A.D. 500-515).



Fa-hien found the Ghoshitārāma tenanted by monks, mostly of the Hīnayāna tenets.

At the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit there 'were more than ten Buddhist monasteries, but all in utter ruin; and the Brethren, who were above 300 in number, were adherents of the Hīnayāna system'. He saw in the south-east corner of the city the ruins of the residence of Ghoshita, a Buddhist temple, a hair-and-nail relic *stūpa* and Buddha's bath-house. Not far from this were situated the Ghoshitārāma with an Aśoka *stūpa*, above 200 ft. high. By its side 'was a place with traces of the sitting and walking up and down of the Four Past Buddhas, and there was another Buddha Hair-and-nail relic tope'. He also recorded the location of a two-storeyed structure, where Vasubandhu was believed to have resided and composed the *Wei-shih-lun* (Vidyāmātra-siddhi), to the south-east of the Ghoshitārāma. To the east of the latter he saw in a mango-grove the foundations only of the structure, which once housed Asaṅga. The pilgrim also recorded the curious tradition of a sandal-wood image of Buddha carved for Udayana and installed in a large temple within the old royal enclosure.

By the side of the Dragon's cave Hiuen Tsang found, besides a *stūpa* of Aśoka, a hair-and-nail relic *stūpa* and remains of Buddha's promenade.

The name of Kauśāmbī survives in Kosam (lat. 25° 17' N.; long. 81° 20' E.; District Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh), which together with the adjoining villages are sited on the extensive ruins of the ancient fortified town of Kauśāmbī. Located on the left bank of the Yamunā, the site is 32 miles west-south-west of Allahabad. The hill in which the Dragon's cave was located has been identified with the neighbouring Pabhosa hill.

The excavation within the fortified area, near the eastern gate, laid bare the remains of a large brick monastery, identified, on the basis of an inscribed slab ascribable to the first century A.D., with the Ghoshitārāma monastery, the base of an impressive *stūpa*, enlarged more than twice, and within the enclosure of the latter a few small *stūpas*, some yielding relics, a temple of Hārītī and an elliptical structure.

The monastery was of the usual quadrangular type with a central courtyard, a pillared verandah, cells and two pylons flanking the entrance to the monastery. The inscription referring to the monastery records the dedication of a slab relieved with foot-prints, evidently of Buddha, in the abode of Buddha by a monk.

The base of the *stūpa*, of burnt bricks, was roughly 81 ft. square. Its central portion was not solid; it was also square, but divided by two diagonally arranged cross-walls of bricks into four triangles packed with alternate floors of mud and bricks. Later additions provided it with a central projection on four sides so that it became *tri-ratha* on plan.

The excavation also yielded a rich crop of architectural pieces, including carved balustrade-pillars, and stone sculptures. The latter includes images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, of which three are dedicated by the nun Buddhāmitrā and two in the reign of Bhadra Magha (second century A.D.) and a few others assignable to the Gupta period.

#### J. LAURIYA-NANDANGARH

The village of Lauriya (lat. 26° 59' N.; long. 84° 24' E.), called by archaeologists Lauriya-Nandangarh, to distinguish it from its namesake (known as Lauriya-Arara)



30 miles to its south-south-east, lies about 16 miles to the north-west of Bettiah in District Champaran, Bihar. Both the Lauriyas derive their name from the inscribed pillars (called *laur* in the local parlance) of Aśoka that they contain. The polished tapering pillar near Mounds A and B at Lauriya-Nandangarh in contrast with the heavy and clumsily-executed one at Basarh (p. 74) is tall and singularly well-proportioned (photo 21). Its capital presents a single lion, placed on a circular abacus relieved with a row of pecking geese, above a lotus.

Lauriya-Nandangarh has about twenty mounds disposed in three rows—one in east-west alignment and the other two north-south and parallel to each other—the Aśokan pillar standing near the two easternmost mounds of the east-west row. Mound A (14 ft. high), the first and the easternmost of the east-west row, was found by excavation to represent a clay *stūpa* with a raised terrace around, both encircled by low burnt-brick circular walls, having a pavement at the base. In the core of the *stūpa*, made of a filling of compact clay, was noticed, below an irregular but circular column of bricks and concrete, a thick layer of ashes and charcoal mixed with charred human bones and fragments of an earthen vessel, which originally contained the cremated remains.

The 22-ft. high Mound B, to the west of Mound A, with a core of hard and compact clay as in Mound A, had a low circular wall of burnt bricks around it, but no human relics were encountered in the clay-filling which formed the core, though fragments of an earthen vase were found below a circular mass of brick-bats and concrete, which appeared at a depth of 9 ft., as in Mound A, and a few animal bones.

Two mounds in the outer north-south row, labelled M and N, each over 40 ft. high, were found to have been built of piled-up layers of yellow alluvial clay with leaves and grass laid between the layers. Each had in the centre a small deposit of charred human bones mixed with charcoal and a small gold leaf with the figure of a standing female in repoussé, similar to one of the two found in the *stūpa* at Piprahwa (p. 80). Below this funerary deposit was a circular hole going down. Mound N, which was excavated down to the natural soil, preserved, below the hole, the lower portion of a tall wooden shaft embedded in the natural soil. The base of Mound N had a stupendous burnt-brick buttress-wall (arranged in offsets with bricks on edge), about 240 ft. in diameter and with an extant height of about 8 ft., forming a ring around the *stūpa*.

The circular base (68 ft. in diameter) of one of the small mounds, collectively designated O, was found to consist of solid brickwork, the bricks, arrayed in rings, being mostly wedge-shaped.

The funerary character of the mounds is well established. At one time it was thought that they represent pre-Mauryan royal burials, erected in accordance with the rituals prescribed in the Vedas. But it is not unlikely that they are in reality Buddhist *stūpas*. In fact, the *stūpa*, represented by Mound A, was worshipped by the Buddhists as late as the sixth or seventh century A.D., as a number of tablets either with the figure of Buddha and the Buddhist creed in characters of that period or with the relief of a *stūpa* were found near the base. That the *stūpas* were quite early in date is proved by their undeveloped features, the discovery of a silver punch-marked coin in the north-eastern slope of Mound A and the stylistic resemblance of the figure on the gold leaves found in



Mounds M and N with that on the gold leaf from the Piprahwa *stūpa* of about the third century B.C. (p. 80).

The excavation of the 82-ft. high mound, known as Nandangarh, standing at a distance of more than a mile to the south-west of the pillar of Aśoka, brought to light the following facts:

The mound, which constitutes the ruins of a colossal *stūpa* (photo 48), had a circumference of about 1500 ft. near the base. The earth forming its core had evidently been obtained by digging an extensive part of the habitation-site in the neighbourhood (which, incidentally, explains the existence of an enormous tank to the south of the mound), as it yielded a large number of stone beads, terracotta figurines, terracotta sealings of about the first century B.C. and coins—punch-marked, cast and an issue of Huvishka (second century A.D.). The *stūpa* must have been erected after that period.

Externally, the *stūpa* rises in terraces, the basement and the lower two terraces above the basement having a polygonal plan and the upper being circular. The cruciform basement has fourteen re-entrant angles and thirteen corners in each of the four quadrants made by four arms, each arm, facing a cardinal direction, being 104 ft. wide. This basement and the two terraces above it evidently form the platform and the so-called circular terraces the moulded base of the drum above the platform. The façades of these polygonal terraces are relieved with plain moulded string-courses. During a later restoration of the *stūpa* new circular walls in terraces with three processional paths were constructed around the basement-terrace and the first two terraces above the latter.

In the core of the *stūpa*, at a depth of 35 ft. from the top, was exposed the top of a complete small *stūpa* (photo 41), 12 ft. high, with a polygonal base. While this *stūpa* contained no relics inside, beside it was a tiny copper casket, inside which there was the long strip of a birch-bark manuscript of about the fourth century A.D.; the few words that could be deciphered show that the manuscript represented a Buddhist text.

## K. NĀLANDĀ

The remains at Nālandā (lat. 25° 8' N.; long. 85° 27' E.; District Patna, Bihar) lie 7 miles to the north of Rajgir (p. 71). According to the Buddhist literature, the place was several times visited by Buddha; the mango-grove of Pāvārika was his favourite halting place. It also acquired sanctity as having been the birth-place of Śāriputra (p. 4). Tāranātha states that Aśoka worshipped at the *chaitya* of Śāriputra and erected a temple here. The same authority notes further that Nāgārjuna, the famous Mahāyāna scholar of the second century A.D., was the high priest of Nālandā and during his time Suvishnu, a Brahmin, built one hundred and eight temples here. In view of Fa-hien's silence about the monastic establishment, the veracity of the statement of the Tibetan historian is doubted. Fa-hien, however, saw the *stūpa* of Śāriputra.

The real importance of Nālandā, no doubt, began during the rule of the Guptas in the fifth century A.D. According to Hiuen Tsang, five kings, presumably of this dynasty, erected as many monasteries at the place, Bālāditya, possibly a Gupta ruler, building a high temple in addition, while a sixth was added by a ruler of central India. The



interest of the Gupta kings is proved not only by the sealings of Narasimhagupta, Kumāragupta II, Budhagupta and Vishnugupta but also by the testimony of an inscription of the time of Yaśovarmadeva (about the beginning of the eighth century A.D.) recording certain gifts including a permanent grant to the image of Buddha in the temple that Bālāditya had built.

Hiuen Tsang further mentioned a number of magnificent temples of great height including a six-storied one in which Pūrṇavarman established an 80-ft. high copper image of Buddha. He also saw a bronze temple under construction by Harshavardhana of Kanauj (A.D. 606-47). That ruler is stated to have patronized the establishment by remitting in its favour the revenues of a hundred villages. Nālandā by this time had become an educational centre of supreme importance, known throughout the Buddhist world—an honoured position which it continued to hold till the end of the twelfth century. Hiuen Tsang stayed and studied in this institution for some time in the first half of the seventh century, and following him several Chinese and Korean travellers visited Nālandā in course of fifty years.

The invaluable records of Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing, supplementing each other, furnish us a graphic picture of this monastic institution in all its aspects. Both spoke eloquently of the virtues of the monastery, the exceptionally high standard of learning, the disciplined life of the residents and the brilliant attainments of the versatile teachers of international repute. The conduct of the monks was regarded as the ideal to be striven at. Indeed, the prestige of this university was so high that the students who even 'stole the name [of Nālandā Brother] were all treated with respect wherever they went'. In fact, right from the beginning, there was no important Mahāyāna philosopher who was not, in some way, connected with Nālandā. The most remarkable feature of this centre was the vast curriculum embracing practically all branches of knowledge, Vedic studies being no exception.

In the next important political epoch in eastern India, under the Pālas (eighth-twelfth centuries A.D.), Nālandā rose to even greater prosperity and celebrity. With continued royal patronage and lavish bounties, it became the focus of Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna Buddhism, which radiated to distant lands through its monks. Padmasambhava, a great luminary of Nālandā, went to Tibet and became the founder of Lamaism. An interesting copper-plate inscription, found in Monastery I, records that the Śailendra king Bālaputradeva of Suvarṇadvīpa (Sumatra) built a monastery here and that at his request King Devapāla (circa A.D. 810-50) granted five villages to meet the expenses of the monks and for the copying of manuscripts. This shows the international status that had been attained by Nālandā in the Buddhist world.

A severe blow fell on this establishment towards the close of the twelfth century when it fell a prey to the destructive hands of the Muslim invaders. As fate would have it, it was only a day's march from Odantapuri (present Bihar Sharif) where a garrison of Muslim forces was stationed. When Dharmasvāmin (p. 63) visited Nālandā in A.D. 1235-36, the establishment was merely a shadow of its past. He found a large number of temples with lofty pinnacles and *vihāras*, but some of them 'damaged by the Turushkas, and there was absolutely no one to look after them, or to make offerings. They were built



of bricks and many were left undamaged'.<sup>35</sup> A band of Turushka soldiers from their base camp of Odantapuri had already stripped the temple of Jñānanātha of its stones. Only two *vihāras*, Dha-na-ba and Ghu-na-ba, were at that time in a serviceable state. There were about seventy monk scholars studying under the head abbot *Mahāpaṇḍita* Rāhulaśrībhadra, an erudite scholar and very strong in grammar, and four other *paṇḍitas*. Even those students fled away when a Brāhmaṇa lay supporter, put into prison at Odantapuri for his support of the *Mahāpaṇḍita* and monks, had smuggled out a message that the Turushka officer of Odantapuri had resolved to kill them. The ninety-year old abbot preferred to stay there and along with him Dharmasvāmin too. Some three hundred Turushka soldiers swooped upon the establishment but returned without finding them, as both took shelter in the already-ruined Jñānanātha temple. In the face of such constant danger to life it is no wonder that the skeleton establishment disappeared shortly but not before the fourteenth century, as Dhyānabhadra of a Korean inscription, who was a native of Magadha, is said to have studied in this institution before he went to Ceylon. Even the name of Nālandā was forgotten, the locality assuming the name of Bargaon, till it was identified by Cunningham. The latter's identification was corroborated by subsequent excavations which yielded the sealings of the Nālandā-mahāvihāra (photo 70).

The four specially venerated images at the time of Dharmasvāmin's visit (p. 63) were the stone image of Khasarpana Lokeśvara in the royal *vihāra*, the wooden image of Mañjuśrī 'with the turned neck', the stone image of Jñānanātha and the painted image of Tārā without ornaments on the wall of the *vihāra*. There was also a temple of Sambara.

The remains at Nālandā have been extensively excavated, as a result of which have come to light the ruins of a large number of structures extending lengthwise from south to north with a range of monasteries along the east side and the temples, thronged by small *stūpas*, along the west of a seemingly approach-avenue. Even in their ruined state they are conspicuous enough to enable one to visualize the glory of the Nālandā-mahāvihāra in its palmy days. Most of the structures date from the Pāla period, though a number of them have an earlier nucleus.

The monasteries, of which eleven have been uncovered—nine on one row facing west and two joining them at right angles on the southern side (photo 49)—, follow the usual monastic pattern (fig. 9, p. 38). All of them bear indications of having been rebuilt again and again without any material deviation from the original plan, after natural decay or conflagration. Monastery 1, the most imposing, having as many as nine distinct occupational levels. The phase in some cases was of minor nature where only a new floor superimposed over the older. But in others the cells, the verandah and the courtyard of the earlier monastery were covered up completely with débris and a new one was laid above by using the walls of the earlier cells as foundations, by heightening the parapet-wall of the earlier verandah and by providing a staircase in the front for the access. Most of the monasteries had at least an upper storey, the landing of the staircase being often lighted by a skylight—an interesting feature. Wells are generally dug inside the courtyard. Though the structures are in brick in mud with a plaster-finish, the pillars of the verandah are in stone. The

<sup>35</sup> G. Roerich and A. S. Altekar, *Biography of Dharmasvāmin* (Patna, 1959), p. 90.



images inside the sanctuary and also in the niches of the entrance-portico are in many cases in stucco.

Of the temples, the most important one (Main Temple, Site 3) is an imposing lofty edifice (photo 72), the result of six successive rebuildings. In its first three stages the structure was of modest dimensions, now invisible within the core of the edifice; it was only in its fourth stage that it attained respectable dimensions. In the fifth stage and the next two stages the shrine, which contained the main object of worship — evidently an image of Buddha —, was placed on a high platform approached from the ground by a high flight of steps. The fallen mass of the temple of one stage was utilized as the base of the platform of the next stage, so that the temple went on gaining in height, till the extant floor of the present sanctum attained the height of more than 50 ft. from the ground. In course of enlargements a number of votive *stūpas* and sanctuaries which had cropped up around it were engulfed either partly or completely within the brickwork. Evidently, the structure had a special sanctity.

The fifth phase of the temple, of the sixth century, is best preserved and documented. With four *stūpas* at corners the shrine was built in the middle of a high platform, of which the eastern side completely and the northern face partially together with a portion of the staircase are now exposed to view. The four corners of the oblong platform have projections which together with the *stūpas* above them present tower-like appearances. These *stūpas* and the façades of the platform including the exposed side of the staircase have an effective decoration in stucco, the theme being mainly the figures of Buddha (photo 73) in all his characteristic attitudes, Padmapāṇi and Maitreya, either within oblong framed niches separated by pilasters or within *chaitya*-windows. Nothing tangible could be made out of the central temple, portions of which still lie within the mass of the brickwork of the later accretions, but it may be presumed that it was analogous to the Mahābodhi temple (p. 53). In this connection Hiuen Tsang's description of the 300-ft. high temple built by Bālāditya at Nālandā is noteworthy. 'In its size and ornamentation and in its image of Buddha this temple resembled the one at the Bodhi Tree.'<sup>86</sup> That temples of this order were in vogue here is proved by terracotta plaques and two stone miniatures preserved in the Nālandā museum.

Among the remaining sanctuaries, three (12, 13 and 14) on the western flank are spectacular on account of their gigantic proportions. Each consists of a sanctum with a fronting porch standing on a platform, the latter decorated with mouldings, niches and pilasters. The southernmost (Temple 12), the grandest of the three, is further distinguished for a subsidiary sanctuary with a pillared porch at each of the four corners of the platform. No less remarkable are the remains of a fourth temple (Temple 2), originally of stone, the platform of which was embellished with more than two hundred sculptured panels which faintly resemble in theme and arrangement the plaques and sculptures of the central edifice of the monastery at Paharpur (p. 242). In none of the four temples is there any indication of the nature of the superstructure over the sanctum. It may, however, be surmised that following the contemporary architectural practice

<sup>86</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan-Chwang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), p. 170.



there were tall spires over them, not unlike that at Bodh-Gaya. The finds of *bhūmī-āmalakas* and stones relieved with *chaitya*-window motif amidst the débris of the stone temple are significant.

All the temples are surrounded by votive *stūpas* of varying sizes. They mostly contained in their cores tablets bearing the Buddhist creed or *dhāraṇīs* or bricks inscribed with the *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra* (p. 22).

The sculptures found at Nālandā and now displayed in the local Museum and other Indian museums represent Buddha (photo 20) and divinities of the Buddhist pantheon, which includes deities of the Vajrayāna tenets as well. Large stone sculptures are not many; a preference for stucco images on the part of the establishment may be responsible for it. But the number of stone miniatures is considerable. Far more impressive are the bronze images (photo 28), discovered in overwhelming numbers, mostly in Monastery 1 in the same level (third from the bottom) where the copper-plate of Devapāla (p. 86) was found. They testify to the place having been a leading centre of metal-casting. The names of two eminent metal-casters of this period are known from Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism in India*: 'In the time of kings Devapāla and Śrīmant Dharmapāla lived in Varendra [Northern Bengal] an especially skilful artist, named Dhīmān; his son was Bitpālo; both these produced many works in cast metal, as well as sculptures and paintings.'<sup>37</sup> The *Pag Sam Jon Zang* has Nalendra (variant of Nālandā) in place of Varendra.<sup>38</sup>

### L. KURKI HAR

Kurkihar (lat. 24° 49' N.; long. 85° 15' E.; District Gaya, Bihar) is a village 3 mile to the north-east of the Wazirganj railway-station (on the Gaya-Kiul line) and 16 miles from Gaya. It attracted the attention of Major Kittoe as early as 1846 by its antiquarian wealth in the form of innumerable small *stūpas* and sculptures, many of the latter inscribed. In 1848 he 'collected ten cart loads of idols, all Buddhist, and many of the Tantrika period', most of them now housed in the Indian Museum (Calcutta).

The three well-defined mounds of Kurkihar along with a few images were noticed by A. Cunningham who visited the place in 1861 and 1879. He also noted a few inscriptions, one of which is written on an architrave and records the construction of a *gandha-kuti* (temple) of Sugata (Buddha) by an inhabitant of Kerala in Dakṣiṇadeśa (south India). Evidently, the temple is represented by the mound locally known as Sugatghar. He further traced in the present name of the village the survival of the name of the ancient Kukkuṭapāda-giri-vihāra, named after Kukkuṭapāda-giri, a hill of high sanctity mentioned both by Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang. It was within this triple-peaked hill that the venerable Mahākāśyapa, disciple of Buddha, is believed to have repaired to await the coming of Maitreya, the future Buddha, to whom he is to hand over the charge of the *Dharma* and also the monk's robe of Buddha. Hiuen Tsang's triple-peaked hill

<sup>37</sup> *Indian Antiquary*, IV (1875), p. 102.

<sup>38</sup> *An. Rep. Arch. Surv. Ind.*, 1921-22, p. 104.



has been identified by Cunningham with the three rugged hills about a mile to the north-north-east of the village. Aurel Stein, however, was in favour of its identification with the Sobhnath hill, about 6 miles south-west of Kurkihar.

Kurkihar was brought into the limelight in 1930, when in course of digging for building material (the mounds being regular quarries for bricks, stone pieces and earth) came out one of the richest hoards of bronze objects within a partly-exposed room inside the largest mound. The site, thus, proved to have been a prolific centre of metal-casting. More than two hundred pieces of this hoard, including one hundred forty-eight Buddhist and eight Brahmanical images of fine workmanship, detached parts of images, *stūpas* (photo 43), bells, etc., are now in the possession of the Patna Museum. Included among the Buddhist images (photos 29 and 74) are a few of the Vajrayāna pantheon and a fairly large number of crowned Buddhas. The height of the largest piece—a standing image of Buddha—is 5 ft., including the pedestal. Some of these images have eyes, *ūṇās* and ornaments inlaid with silver, while a few are plated with gold (photo 75). The majority of them bear inscriptions—mostly short dedicatory labels or merely Buddhist creed and rarely a *dhāraṇī*. Of outstanding importance are eight images bearing the regnal years of the Pāla kings like Devapāla, Rājyapāla, Mahipāla and Vigrahapāla; the stylistic considerations and the palaeography of the labels of these images are of immense value in dating most of the images of this collection, which as a whole was of the Pāla period. Two or three of this hoard, remarkable for their technical qualities, are generally taken to be pre-Pāla on stylistic grounds. The images bear close affinity to the bronze images of Nālandā, which is only natural, being mostly the products of the Pāla regime, to which are ascribable almost all the sculptures available here.

The magnificence of this establishment in its flourishing days can easily be visualized not only from the extensive mounds and remarkable abundance of antiquities—votive *stūpas*, sculptures and architectural pieces, still lying at the site (many fixed to the walls of the houses of the villagers, some in the collection of the local zemindar and others in the Devasthan)—but also from the inscriptions, both on the sculptures and bronzes, recording the pious donations of a large number of devotees hailing from distant lands like Sākala (Sialkot in the Punjab), Kāñchī (Kanchipuram), Pāṇḍya (extreme south) and the island of Bali.

A large-scale excavation at the mounds will, no doubt, bring to light structural remains and trustworthy material relating to the history of this great centre.



## 2. MADHYA PRADESH

Buddhism appears to have been firmly established in Madhya Pradesh since the days of Aśoka who erected a *stūpa* and a pillar at Sanchi (p. 97), 6 miles south-west of Vidisha. Aśoka's deep interest in the Buddhist establishment of Sanchi is apparent in his edict, on the pillar, recording his threat of excommunication, from the *Saṅgha*, of any monk and nun attempting to create schism in the *Saṅgha*. Two of his Minor Rock-Edicts have been engraved on the rocks at Gujarra (District Datia) and Rupnath (District Jabalpur).

The two centuries immediately preceding the Christian era witnessed a tremendous outburst of creative activity in Ākara (eastern Malwa). The economic prosperity of its populous capital, Vidiśā (modern Besnagar near Vidisha), at the confluence of the Betwa and the Bes, gave a great stimulus to these vast building schemes. Apart from Sanchi, where monumental edifices were added to the already-existing ones, there sprang forth several important groups of Buddhist establishments in quiet and retired spots on sandstone hills within a radius of 12 miles from the capital. Particularly impressive among these are the monuments at Sonari, about 6 miles south-west of Sanchi, Satdhara, about 6½ miles west of Sanchi, Bhojpur (Pipalia), about 7 miles east-south-east of Sanchi and Andher, nearly 9 miles east-south-east of Vidisha. These groups are chiefly known for their imposing *stūpas*, consisting of circular drums and almost hemispherical domes similar to and almost contemporaneous with *Stūpas* 1 (as enlarged in the second century B.C.), 2 and 3 of Sanchi. Several of the *stūpas* yielded relics including those of the direct disciples of Buddha and later Buddhist teachers. Overshadowed by the towering and well-preserved monuments at Sanchi, these groups, though highly important, have not drawn the attention they deserve partly on account of their somewhat remote situations. Unlike Sanchi, these centres as well as Bharhut (pp. 92-96), which rose to great prominence during the rule of the Śuṅgas, dwindled in importance after the Christian era.

That the religion was prosperous in the region in the days of the Guptas is proved not only by the structural remains and sculptures of Sanchi but by inscriptions, sculptures and monuments at other places also. The nature of the monuments was varied too. The outstanding examples of the rock-cut monuments are at Bagh (pp. 99-102) and Dhamnar (pp. 104-06), the former group celebrated for its marvellous paintings. A promising site of this epoch is Phophnar (District East Nimar), about 15 miles from Burhanpur, which is yet to be fully explored. Apart from the mounds containing ruins of brick structures, the site yielded seven superb bronze images of standing Buddha in *abhaya-mudrā* (photo 79) and five parasols, all in bronze. Four of these images bear dedicatory inscriptions in characters of the fifth-sixth century A.D. Another important centre was at Mandasor, ancient Daśapura, of which hardly any remains are now available. A stone-inscription found in the inner face of the east wall of the fort here records the construction of a *stūpa*, a *prapā* and an *ārāma* and the excavation of a well (*kūpa*) within the limits of the Lokottara-vihāra in the Mālava Samvat 524<sup>1</sup> (A.D. 467-68) by Dattabhāṭa, whose father was a general

<sup>1</sup> *Epigraphia Indica*, XXVII (1947-48), pp. 12-18.



(*senāpati*) of Govindagupta, son of Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty. The *stūpa*, the *yashī* of which is said to have touched the clouds, was probably covered with plaster, as it is described as white as the *kunda* flower and the moon.

Buddhism continued to flourish in the post-Gupta period as well not only at Sanchi, which had a long and a chequered career, but at many other places. While some of the sites are partly explored, others are yet to be exposed. One of the *stūpas* of the seventh-eighth century A.D. has been located at Gyaspur (District Vidisha) where four remarkable images of Buddha are still attached to the base of the dome. A stronghold of Buddhism of this period was at Sirpur (pp. 102 and 103) which nourished a prosperous establishment during the reign of the Pāṇḍuvamśis of South Kosala.

A partially-explored site is located on the hill known as Guptesvara or Gopeshwar in the vicinity of Barauni village (District Datia).<sup>2</sup> Here inscribed terracotta tablets and plaques were noticed amidst a heap of earth and brick-bats. The tablets bear the Buddhist creed in characters of the ninth or tenth century A.D. and the representation of a *stūpa*.

From the available evidence it appears that most of the early Hinayāna centres gradually gave way to the Mahāyāna form of Buddhism in the centuries following the Christian era. The influence of Vajrayāna does not appear to have been widely felt, though it is certain that this later form of Buddhism did extend its roots in a few establishments including that of Sanchi which has yielded images of the deities of the typically Vajrayāna pantheon like Vajrasattva and Mārīchi.

#### A. BHARHUT

Among the monuments, which flowered during the rule of the Śuṅgas (circa 187-75 B.C.), who supplanted the Mauryas, those at Bharhut (lat. 24° 27' N.; long. 80° 52' E.; District Satna),<sup>3</sup> about 9 miles south of Satna railway-station, and at Sanchi (pp. 97 f.) hold supremely-exalted places not only in the Buddhist world but in the history of Indian art. Unlike the great monuments of the Maurya period, the edifices of this age at both the places were chiefly the under-takings of the masses who engaged skilled artisans for the purpose. The fates of these two early centres are, however, different. Sanchi, despite the natural process of decay and depredations of amateur archaeologists, has escaped the vindictive hand of a destroyer and cherishes the best-preserved structural monuments of India. But the monuments at Bharhut were completely razed to the ground; the materials of the foundations even were utilized by the villagers in their houses. When Cunningham discovered the site in 1873, the major portion of the priceless railing of the Main *Stūpa* had been damaged and carted away by the local people. After laying some trenches with the help of his indefatigable assistant, Beglar, he was able to trace the ground-plan of the *stūpa*. He also succeeded in salvaging a portion of the great railing (photo 76) and the eastern gateway, mostly from the site and partly from the villagers. Foreseeing their inevitable

<sup>2</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1963-64—A Review*, p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> Situated at the foot of the hill of Lal-pahar, the village of Bharhut is approachable by a jeep both from Satna and Uchehra. The river Tons flows by the eastern side of the hill.



doom, in case he left them there, he removed the pieces to Calcutta where he planted them in the Indian Museum (photo 39) as gifts of the Raja of Nagod. Fifty-four stray pieces of this railing, which could be retrieved from the private persons of the neighbouring villages, were brought later on by Braj Mohan Vyas to the Allahabad Museum. A few pieces have recently been acquired by the National Museum, New Delhi.

One is shocked to see the site of this well-known centre. Nothing of the Main Stūpa is visible at present except a shallow circular depression around a slightly-raised circular ground. The denuded site is strewn with brick-bats and small pieces of sandstone of dark-mauve colour. Several fragments of images of Buddha and Buddhist deities are fixed to the back wall of a modern temple of Hanumān in the village of Bharhut.

The Main Stūpa, made of brick and finished with a coat of plaster on the exterior, was located on a low eminence at the foot of the hill, called Lal-pahar. Cunningham was able to exhume a fragment of the south-east facing wall of its base to a height of 6 ft. and length of 10 ft. which evidently formed a part of the drum. The latter, 67 ft. 8½ in. in diameter, had in its upper portion a succession of stepped niches, 13½ in. broad at the top and 4½ in. at the bottom, at an interval of 8½ in. to 9 in. in each row. Each niche, with its sides of two steps, could accommodate five lamps in three rows. In the absence of the superstructure one has to visualize its form from the representations of *stūpas* on the railing. These consist each of a drum capped by a railing, a hemispherical dome and a *harmikā*, within a railing at the base, crowned by a corbelled member from which rises the shaft of the umbrella. The local people reported to Cunningham the discovery of a *ḍibiyā* (a small box), evidently the relic-casket, encountered in course of diggings in the middle of the *stūpa*, but its whereabouts could not be ascertained.

The circular processional path, 10 ft. 4 in. wide, around had a thick flooring of lime-plaster. The floor was edged with a line of curbed kerb-stones, against which were fixed the posts of the great railing. The terraced floor extended beyond the railing to a distance of several feet. On this extension were found some stone votive *stūpas* and remains of brick walls, some of the latter being again plinths of votive *stūpas*.

From the discovery of two posts, each with a height of 2 ft. 1 in. and breadth of 7 in. and containing standing figures, and ten pieces of a plain curbed coping, the latter found outside the railing, Cunningham presumed the existence of an outer railing erected at a later date due to the accumulation of the remains of structures around the early railing. At that time the visitors, according to him, used to descend to the processional path by a stone staircase, of which one, with a width of 3 ft. 1 in. and having at least seven steps of 10 in. each, was found loose. It is, however, not unlikely that the pieces of the railing formed part of the balustrade around the upper processional path above the drum to which the staircase also gave access. The stylistic considerations of the figures on these posts do not suggest a much later date for them as postulated by Cunningham.

The date of the construction of the *stūpa* is unknown, but no doubt it has acquired a wide celebrity by the time of the construction of the railing (Cunningham's inner railing), as many of the donors hailed from distant places like Vidiśā (Besnagar near Vidisha), Karahakaṭa (Karhad, District Satara), Nasik (p. 168), Kauśāmbī (Kosam, p. 83) and Pāṭaliputra (Patna).



The railing (*circa* second half of the second century B.C.) was the result of the joint effort of individuals, including monks and nuns, their names often inscribed on their gifts. This railing (*vedikā*), about 9 ft. high, with an inner diameter of 88 ft.  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in., was divided into four quadrants by four openings facing the cardinal points. Covering the direct approach to the *stūpa* and returning from the left side of the entrance was an L-shaped extension of the quadrants. The railing comprised a series of oblong posts (*stambhas*) with three parallel sets of lenticular cross-bars (*sūchi*) mortised into the posts on either side and capped by a huge coping (*ushnīsha*) rounded at the top.

The railing was luxuriantly carved with a profusion of bas-reliefs throwing a flood of light not only on the contemporary Buddhist religion, art-traditions, beliefs and practices but what life was like in those days. The object of the narratives, particularly the *Jātakas* (tales of Buddha's previous births) and the life-scenes of Buddha, was twofold: one was to beautify the cherished object of sanctity and the second to imprint permanently on the popular mind the sacred lores, the visual representations of which are far more convincing than the texts describing them. The appeal of these representations is direct and immediate and the effect indelible.

Particularly interesting among the bas-reliefs are those depicting the *Jātakas*, of which more than thirty are identified on the extant quadrant. The inscribed labels attached to most of them are of immense help in identifying these *Jātakas*, the treatment of which is, however, condensed in most cases. The versions, depicted for the first time in these reliefs, sometimes slightly differ from those of the extant texts.

According to the Buddhist tradition, Buddha, as a Bodhisattva (p. 13, fn. 4), went through more than five hundred births, as bird, beast and man, persistently qualifying himself, by his practice of noble deeds involving even self-sacrifice for the sake of others and by the greatest acquisition of virtues like *dāna*, *prajñā*, *śīla*, *kṣānti*, etc., more and more in every successive birth for his ultimate Buddhahood. Thus, in the *Sasa Jātaka*, Bodhisattva, born as a hare, jumped into fire so that his roasted body might serve as a meal to Śakra, come in disguise, as he, unlike his friends—a jackal, an otter and a monkey—who brought respectively a lizard, fish and fruits, could not procure any food for his guest. Born as a monkey, in the *Mahākapi Jātaka*, he felt so much for the life of his followers that he made a supreme sacrifice by forming with the help of his body a bridge for the escape of his retinue, who, living on the fruits of a mango-tree by the side of the Gaṅgā, became the target of the arrows of the king of Vārāṇasī. The monkeys safely landed on the other bank, but the last one, out of wrath, jumped on his back with such a force that it killed him. As a generous prince of the Sibi kingdom, Vessantara, in the *Vessantara Jātaka*, courted banishment by making a gift of the rain-producing elephant to the drought-stricken people of Kaliṅga. On his way to the forest, he gave away first his horses and next the chariot and arrived on foot in his forest-retreat where also he did not hesitate to give away his children and ultimately even his wife to the supplicants.

In the life-scenes carved on the railing, Buddha was never represented in human form. Whenever a scene demanded his portrayal, his presence was indicated by some symbol, for example, a seat, *tri-ratnas* and footprints. A throne under the



*Bodhi* tree, a wheel and a *stūpa* symbolized respectively his Enlightenment, Sermon and Demise.

The broad central frieze of both sides of the coping has two borders, the upper of stepped merlons, alternating with blue lotuses, and the lower of a chain with hanging bells. The treatment of the frieze of the inner face, in contradistinction to the outer one which has a continuous row of full-blown lotuses within wavy undulations of a creeper, the latter often issuing from the mouths of elephants, is rich and elaborate; in the foils of the foliated creepers is marshalled with a pleasing decorative effect a great variety of motifs—animals, birds, fabulous creatures, different kinds of fruits, plants, flowers, buds and ornaments, *Jātakas* and scenes from the life of common people.

The majority of the posts have a full medallion, like those of cross-bars, in the middle and a half medallion at the base and also at the top. These and also the medallions on the cross-bars are replete with motifs like buildings, *tri-ratnas*, *stūpas*, animals, serpent-heads, peacocks, *makaras*, full-blown lotuses, lotuses with human busts in the centre, floral and plant compositions, including flowering plants issuing from pots and coming from the mouths or navels of the squatting figures, a sanctuary, a unique acrobatic feat, *dharma-chakra* on a pillar, *Jātakas*, incidents from the life of Buddha, including the famous representations of the dream of Māyā (p. 1; photo 1) and the purchase of Jetavana (p. 4; photo 13), and the *Bodhi* trees with the vacant seats of the Mānushi-Buddhas,<sup>4</sup> the predecessors of Gautama Buddha.

The treatment of the remaining posts, comprising mainly terminal ones, is different. In respect of subject-matter, these again fall into two groups. One group, which includes all such posts of the quadrants, has large-sized standing figures of folk-divinities like *yakshas*, *yakshīs* and *nāgas*, *śālabhañjikās*, an armed foreigner and riders. The other group, restricted to the extensions of the quadrants, is divided into three vertical compartments, each containing a detailed composition including *Jātakas* and scenes from the life of Buddha, e.g. Arhadgupta's announcement of the future inauguration of the *Dharma* by Buddha, worship of the head-dress of Buddha in heaven (p. 2, foot-note 3; photo 4), the Enlightenment at the foot of the *Bodhi* tree (p. 2), the rejoicings of the divine and semi-divine beings at the defeat of Māra and Buddha's Enlightenment, Nāga Erāpata's worship of Buddha, descent at Sāṅkāśya from the Trayastriṃśa heaven (p. 5), Prasenajit's drive in a chariot to visit Buddha (p. 5), procession of Ajātaśatru (p. 6) on an elephant on a similar errand and the *stūpa* symbolizing *mahā-parinirvāṇa*.

About fifty years after the building of the railing were added the gateways, of which the eastern one was erected, as may be gathered from an inscription on it, by Vātsīputra Dhanabhūti, grandson of King Gārgīputra Viśvadeva, during the reign of the Śuṅgas. Like the railing, the gateways were made of sandstone of chocolate-red colour. The extant eastern gateway, 22 ft. 6 in. high, consists of two pillars, each a combination of four octagonal pillars with a square base, a lotus member and an oblong abacus, capped by two pairs of addorsed animals, supporting a superstructure of three carved curviform

<sup>4</sup> They are Vipasyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni and Kāśyapa.



architraves, the ends of the latter having a *makara* with a spirally-curved tail. The architraves are connected with one another with blocks, set in the same vertical line as the pillars, uprights relieved with figures and moulded balusters, some bearing as mason's marks single Kharoshthi letters. It is likely that the masons for the gateways were imported from the north-western India. Crowning the topmost architrave is a *dharma-chakra* above a honeysuckle pattern in the centre flanked by two *tri-ratnas*.

As already noted, the art of Bharhut was the vigorous expression of a mass-movement. Compared to the imperial court-art of the Mauryas with its classical qualities, this indigenous folk art appears archaic. The figure-style is undeveloped. Generally represented facing, the figures, lacking in expression, are characterized by stiffness, the poses awkward and void of flexions and elasticity. The plastic conception is rudimentary, and there are hardly any attempts towards grading the different parts of the body into various depths. The figures and the surroundings are delineated without perspective in regard to lines and planes. The method of narration is often extremely abridged. Hardly any heed has been paid towards time and space, as scenes occurring at different places and different times are carved together. The compositions are also unsatisfactory. The background is never thought a necessity.

Despite these imperfections, this demotic art impresses people by its sincerity, unaffected naïveté, buoyancy and freshness. Not under the restraint of a hieratic coterie, the simple artisans, with their limited training but with an imperishable spirit of creation pulsating in their veins, translated on stone the intense religious aspirations and fervour, theirs as well as those of the donors. These craftsmen further had a fine natural bent for decorative beauty and wove certain motifs like creepers and flowers into things of surprising excellence. Much of the effect of the embellishments is due, no doubt, to these redeeming qualities.

The site was not deserted at least till the eleventh century, as is evident from the find of several Buddhist figures of this date. Cunningham also found, near the *stūpa*, the remnant of a mediaeval temple with a colossal image enshrined. Nothing of it can now be traced except a piece of cusped stone of the ceiling.

## B. SANCHI

The establishment at Sanchi<sup>5</sup> (lat. 23° 29' N.; long. 77° 45' E.; District Raisen) by far overshadows others in Madhya Pradesh not only by the number and variety of its monuments but also by the quality of its architectural and sculptural products. Indeed, among the vast galaxy of structural monuments of India, Sanchi, with its well-preserved monuments, stands out majestically. Further, it has the singular distinction of having specimens of almost all kinds of Buddhist architectural forms. With its nucleus dating from the third century B.C., the establishment continued to flourish till the twelfth century A.D., despite all political changes due to the rise and fall of many dynasties.

<sup>5</sup> A railway-station between Bina and Bhopal Junctions of the Central Railway, Sanchi is easily approachable by road from both Vidisha and Bhopal.



The site had no associations with the Master and the earliest structures were the work of Aśoka who erected on the flattened top of the hill a brick *stūpa* and by its side a polished pillar of the Chunar sandstone with a capital similar to the one at Sarnath (p. 66). One of the reasons behind Aśoka's selection of the site might have been his early association with Vidiśā, when, as a viceroy of Ujjayini, he married the daughter of a banker of this city. This queen of Aśoka was a devotee of Buddha and is stated in the Ceylonese chronicles to have constructed a monastery on the Vedisagiri (variantly Chetiyagiri), generally identified with the hill of Sanchi. Her son was the famous Mahendra, who carried Buddhism to Ceylon.

The neighbouring village of Kanakheda preserves the ancient name of the locality, which was Kākaṇāya or Kākaṇāva. In the Gupta inscriptions it was called Kākaṇāda-boṭa after which the hill later came to be known as Boṭaśrī-parvata.

As already noted (p. 24), the *stūpa* of Aśoka underwent enlargement (photo 37) with an encasing of dressed stones in the Śuṅga period which also saw the construction of the drum-balustrade and the ground-balustrade, the latter around the processional path at the ground-level (fig. 1, p. 25). In the first century B.C. were added four gateways (p. 26), which, with their rich texture vibrant with lavish carvings, are unique of their kind (photo 77). The form of the gateways (fig. 2, p. 27) is similar to that of the eastern gateway of Bharhut (pp. 95 f.); but here the pillars are oblong in section. The projecting ends of the architraves are supported by the arresting figures of *śālabhaṅjikās*. The entire surface of the gateways is replete with bas-reliefs depicting five *Jātakas*—*Vessantara Jātaka* (p. 94), *Mahākapi Jātaka* (p. 94), *Chaddanta Jātaka*, *Sāma Jātaka* (p. 176) and *Alambusā Jātaka*—, incidents (photos 7, 10, 11, 15 and 16) from the life of Buddha (the latter invariably represented by symbols), miscellaneous scenes including the division of relics, the *stūpa* of Rāmagrāma and Aśoka's homage to the *Bodhi* tree, Māmushi-Buddhas and ornamental patterns and figures. These reliefs, with their decorative beauty and edifying narration, make an irresistible appeal to the human mind. From the technical point of view, these reliefs are an advance upon those of Bharhut (p. 96) in composition, perspective as well as in modelling.

The last addition to the *stūpa* was made in the Gupta period when four seated images of Buddha, each under a pillared canopy, were consecrated against the drum of the *stūpa* facing the four entrances.

Besides this *stūpa*, which is known as Great *Stūpa* or *Stūpa* 1, there are many others. Among them stand conspicuously *Stūpas* 2 and 3. *Stūpa* 3, of about the second century B.C. and modelled after *Stūpa* 1, is located by the latter's side. The top of its drum, gained by a staircase, served as the second *pradakṣiṇa-patha*, the first one existing on the ground around it. Its ground-balustrade, relieved with lotus-patterns, and a single gateway, carved luxuriantly like the gateways of *Stūpa* 1, were constructed respectively in the first century B.C. and A.D. The relic-content of this *stūpa* is of great sanctity, as the bone pieces, as known from the inscription on the stone boxes containing the caskets, belonged to the two foremost disciples of Buddha, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. The relics of these two distinguished persons were also found in the contemporaneous *Stūpa* 2 of Satdhara (p. 91) on the bank of the Bes.



Stūpa 2, on a lower ledge, is without any gateway, but its ground-balustrade with four L-shaped openings, of about the second century B.C., is remarkable for its ornamental reliefs, mostly framed inside medallions. These reliefs bear a family-resemblance to those of Bharhut and represent the folk-art in its true indigenous character with all its archaism, simplicity and decorative beauty. This *stūpa* is also important in its yield of the body-relics of ten Buddhist luminaries of at least three generations of teachers, including Kāśapagōta and Majhima (p. 10), who were commissioned to preach the doctrine in the Himalayan region in the reign of Aśoka. The evidence of this *stūpa* together with that of Andher and Sonari, the *stūpas* of which, too, yielded the relics of several of these teachers, proves that even by the second century B.C. the cult of dissemination of relics extended from Buddha and his direct disciples to the later dignitaries of the *Saṅgha*.

Stūpa 5, with a circular plinth and ascribable to the sixth century A.D., is distinguished by an image of Buddha built against its south face.

The group, comprising Stūpas 12, 13, 14 and 16 of the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., is characterized by square bases, the latter strengthened by footings. Against the wall of the relic-chamber within the core of Stūpa 14 was found an image of Buddha of the Mathura workshop and belonging to the early Gupta period. From its worn appearance it is presumed that the image was enshrined in it after its original resting-place had been damaged.

Besides the pillar of Aśoka, there are other free-standing stone pillars, of which Pillar 25 goes back to the Śuṅga period and Pillars 26 and 35 to the fifth century A.D. Pillar 35, a massive one (now broken), is of singular interest, as it once bore on its abacus, placed on a bell-shaped lotus, a beautiful standing image of Vajrapāṇi (now exhibited in the local Museum).

The number of temples, including the already-noted Temple 17 (pp. 52 and 53; photo 56), is fairly considerable, some of them being reduced to their plinths. The earliest, no doubt, is Temple 40 (p. 46), an apsidal hall, built on an oblong platform dating from the Maurya period. When the superstructure, which was most probably of timber, was consumed in flames, it was enlarged in the second century B.C. and made into a pillared hall. The last addition to this structure was made in the seventh or eighth century A.D.

Temple 18 is a seventh-century apsidal sanctuary (p. 50) with a *stūpa* (now extinct), built on the foundation of an earlier apsidal hall of the Śuṅga age. Preceded by an antechamber, it consists of an apse with a masonry wall at the back and sides, a nave with high imposing pillars and aisles. About the tenth or eleventh century A.D. were added door-jambs, richly carved with a variety of motifs, including the figure of Gaṅgā.

Built on a high platform, Temple 31 is an oblong pillared shrine with a flat ceiling. It contains a large image of Buddha.

None of the extant monasteries can be dated earlier than the sixth century A.D., though some of them were raised over the ruins of earlier ones. The most imposing among these is Monastery 51, designed on the familiar monastic plan—an open brick-paved courtyard with an enclosing verandah and beyond the latter a range of cells, twenty-two in number excluding the entrance-passage and the spacious chamber opposite. The entrance is flanked by pylons.



Monasteries 36, 37 and 38 are of nearly the same plan, but on a smaller scale, ascribable to the seventh century A.D. Monasteries 36 and 37 have central platforms, while 36 and 38 had originally an upper storey.

Monasteries 46 and 47, of the eleventh century A.D., built on the ruins of earlier monasteries, belong to one complex. Monastery 47 is a court flanked by a pillared verandah with a small cell and a long room behind it on the south, a covered colonnade on the west and on the north a pillared verandah leading to an antechamber and shrine at the western end and at the back to a corridor with five cells. Monastery 46, gained through 47, has a courtyard with cells on three sides.

Monastery 45, with remains of two periods respectively of the seventh-eighth and tenth-eleventh centuries A.D., is remarkable for its temple. The cells of the first period are arranged in the usual quadrangular way. The remains of the shrine, which evidently occupied the central portion of the back flank, are now invisible except for a small section of the platform in the front which projected considerably into the courtyard. Over the ruins of this temple was built the temple of the second period, which, with the lower portion of its spire, still stands (p. 55; photo 58).

### C. BAGH

On a solitary sandstone cliff in the otherwise basaltic region of the Vindhyan slopes, with the stream Bagh, a tributary of the Narmada, murmuringly washing its feet, flourished in about the fifth-sixth centuries A.D. a small colony of Buddhists in nine caves, perched at a height of 30 ft. The site, 90 miles west-south-west of the Mhow railway-station, is known after this river as also the adjoining small township of Bagh (lat. 22° 22' N.; long. 74° 47' E.; District Dhar), 3 miles away.

Nature has dealt relentlessly with these caves, their soft friable texture precipitating the wreckage. This has caused an irreparable loss to our heritage, as the walls and ceilings of these caves were once a repository of a splendid array of classical paintings, parallels of which now alone survive in India in the contemporary murals of Ajanta, both belonging to one cognate group. The remnants of paintings, though extremely scrappy and scanty, are of such compelling quality that the place, notwithstanding its remote situation, forms a pilgrimage to the artist, aspiring to catch something of their sacred fire.

Architecturally, these caves are affiliated to the contemporary caves of the Deccan, but still they evince some singular traits. Thus, the absence of the *chaitya-griha* is as conspicuous a feature as the presence of the *stūpa* in the shrine-chamber of the self-contained monasteries. The monks evidently considered a separate *chaitya-griha* unnecessary when the monasteries accommodated a chapel. The worship of a *stūpa* in the chapel, instead of an image of Buddha as in other rock-cut monasteries of this period, is rather enigmatic, particularly when there are images of Buddha on the walls of the caves.

The first cave is a four-pillared chamber preceded by a portico, the latter utterly ruined.

Of the usual quadrangular monastic plan but on an elaborate scale is Cave 2. Its façade was originally relieved with *chaitya*-windows having insets of tiger-heads and



lotuses. The cave consists of a court with a niche for an image at either side, a pillared verandah with a cell at either end, a hall with eighteen cells arrayed on three sides and a pillared antechamber leading to a shrine at the back of the hall. The hall, with three doors and two windows, has, besides the twenty pillars arranged in a square, an inner group of four pillars with moulded circular bases, spirally-fluted shafts and bracket-capitals, right in the centre—a novel feature of the group, perhaps dictated by the anxiety to ensure stability. The pillars of the outer square share common traits in the moulded square bases, in the lower portions of the shafts which are also square and in the bracket-capitals. But the treatment of the upper portions of the shafts is diverse, some passing through an octagon to sixteen sides, others becoming fluted, some having spiral flutings, still others with oblique reedings and some again relieved with a variety of motifs, including halves of lotuses.

The side walls of the antechamber have each a bold relief of standing Buddha in *vara-mudrā* flanked by two attendants. The door of the shrine is guarded by two Bodhisattvas, of which the one, bereft of ornaments and with a water-flask in the left hand, stands for Avalokiteśvara. The *stūpa* in the shrine has a high moulded octagonal base, a drum, also moulded both at the base and at the top, a dome drawn near the base, a corbelled *harmikā* and a *chhatra* reaching up to the ceiling.

The plan of Cave 3 is unusual. Preceded by a forecourt, it consists of a hall, with eight octagonal pillars, a row of four cells on the right side of the hall, a pillared hall, probably a later addition, at the back side, and at the left side a complex of cells comprising a pillared vestibule leading to a rear chamber, with painted figures of Buddha and kneeling devotees on its walls, and four cells, two each on either side of the chamber but separated by a passage. A similar complex with painted figures of Buddha on the walls of the central chamber is present on the left side of the court.

Cave 4 (fig. 18), locally known as Rangmahal, no doubt, on account of its paintings, is the most ornamental of the caves. Similar to Cave 2 on plan, it is, however, more spacious. The number of cells around the hall is twenty-seven, including the two at the back of two cells; one of these two cells is excavated below the floor-level of the one that precedes it. The shrine, with a *stūpa*, lacks the front vestibule.

The treatment of the hall, with its carved pillars, doors and windows, is lavish. Like Cave 2, the hall has two groups of colonnades, the inner complement being mostly of masonry. The brackets of the pillars of the outer square are partly painted and partly carved with the motifs of animals, including fabulous creatures. But the hall is further distinguished by three ornate porticos (photo 78); the latter's roof, coming out from the top of the two central pillars of the back and side rows of the outer square, rests on two front carved circular columns. The entablature over the front columns is decorated with a composition of motifs simulating the façades of a *chaitya-griha* with the figures of Buddha inside and heads within the *chaitya*-windows.

The frame of the central doorway is sculptured elegantly with bands of scroll-work, floral motifs and cable-patterns, besides seated figures of Buddha and *chaitya*-windows inset with heads on the upper facets of the lintel supported by pilasters and the figure of Gaṅgā on the consoles at either end.

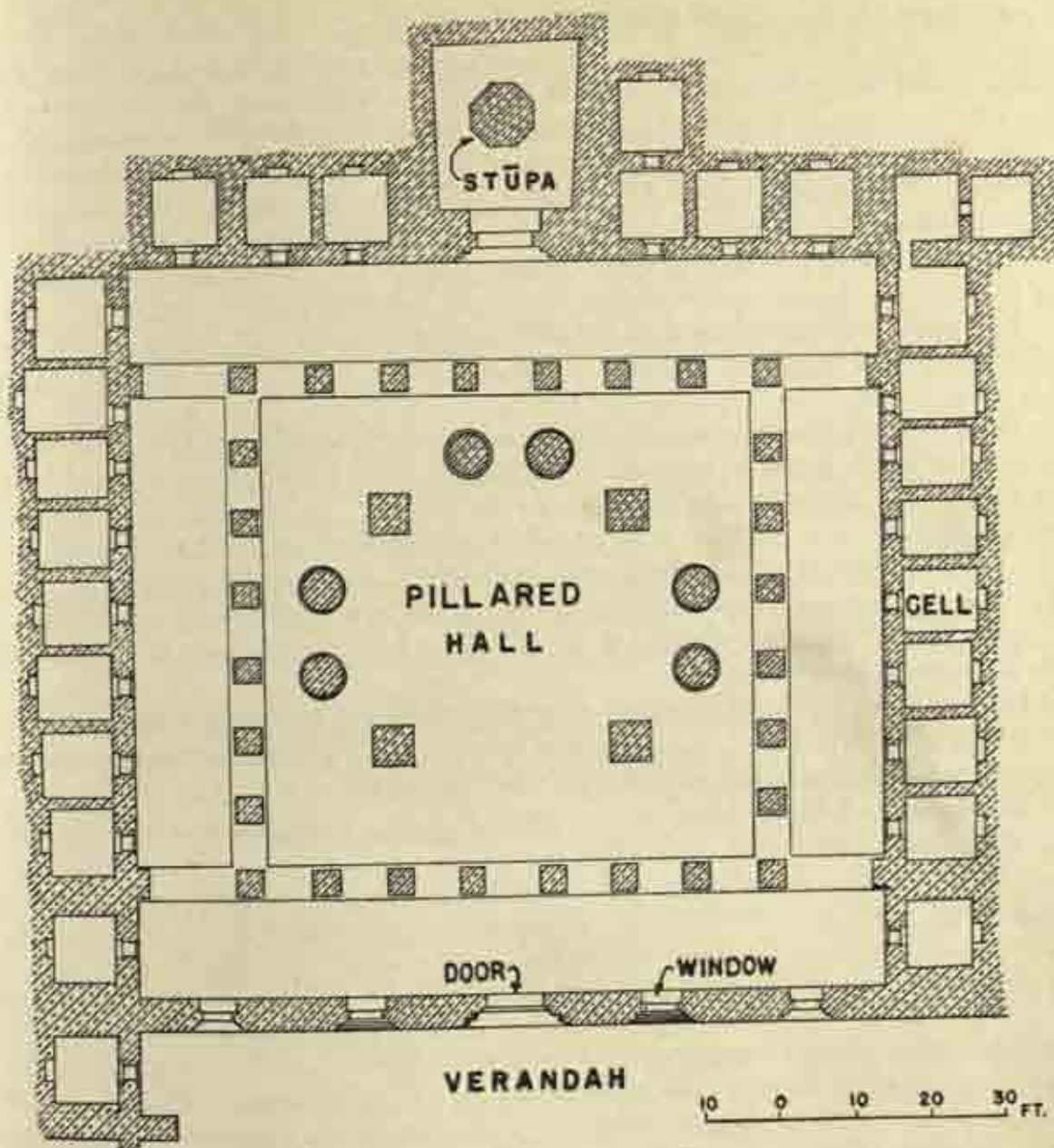


FIG. 18. Bagh : Cave 4, plan

This cave was once lavishly painted, the ancient brushwork surviving only in patches. The largest segment—a masterpiece indeed—is on the back wall of the verandah. It is a large frieze-like composition, depicting a string of seemingly unconnected narratives. Beginning from the left is a touching scene of a weeping lady by the side of her sympathetic companion, a beauty of great dignity, decorated sparsely but elegantly. Next is a group of four seated persons, two with crowns, deeply absorbed in a serious, probably religious, discussion. Beyond this is a bevy of musicians and dancers followed by two grand processions—one a majestic cavalcade of a host of cavaliers with noble bearing and tailored



garments on spirited horses and the second a mixed drive of horsemen and elephant-riders, the latter including groups of women, seen immediately beyond a vaulted structure. What episode these mute scenes are intended to convey is a mystery, not yet unravelled; still these murals are of an absorbing interest on account of their classical qualities in respect of scale of colour, composition, form, figure-style and aesthetical quality. Indeed, the figures with their majestic grace, never tinted by an undue exuberance of ornaments, soft and sensuous modelling and rhythmic composition bespeak a highly-developed artistic vision and technical skill of the master-painter responsible for this pageant of epic grandeur.

The walls, ceilings and some of the pillars of the hall are embellished with a great variety of floral and plant compositions and animal-figures, all rendered with consummate skill.

The pillared verandah of Cave 5 is a continuation of that of Cave 4. At its right end is a chamber corresponding to the one at the left end of the verandah of Cave 4. It seems that this cave is an annexe of Cave 4. At the back of the verandah is a long hall (refectory?) with two parallel rows of pillars having plain round shafts capped by a plain cushion over which is a splayed-out member, each row on a running plinth. Parallel to the plinths and fashioned against the walls is a projection, probably meant for seats. The hall is entered by a door and lighted by four windows. This cave, too, was once sumptuously painted.

Connected by a passage with the hall of Cave 5 is Cave 6, a small monastery with a hall having three cells at the back and two on the right sides. The hall with a door and two windows on the front side has a set of four pillars arranged in a square as in Cave 1.

The remaining three caves are badly dilapidated. Among them Cave 7 is a fairly large monastery with a *stūpa* in the chapel.

#### D. SIRPUR

Sirpur (lat. 21° 20' N.; long. 82° 11' E.; District Raipur), though now a small village on the right bank of the Mahanadi and about 53 miles from Raipur town, was once a large town of considerable importance. In the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Śrīpura was the capital of the Pāṇḍuvamśis of South Kosala. The Brahmanical affiliation of the place, teeming with remains of beautiful temples, including the famous Lakshmaṇa temple, and sculptures, was long known.

The Buddhist association of the place, suspected as early as 1881-82 by Cunningham on the basis of the find of the colossal head of an image of Buddha and partly confirmed by the discovery of a complete inscribed image of Buddha in the first decade of the present century and also by more recent discovery of a cache of bronze images, notable alike for their technical qualities, artistic excellence and variety, was amply borne out by the recent unearthing of two monasteries and ancillary structures, about half a mile to the south of the Lakshmaṇa temple.

One of the two excavated monasteries is particularly rich in large-sized sculptures. Oblong on plan, it has the usual quadrangular monastic plan of a paved courtyard with a



pillared verandah all around opening into cells at the back. The central cell at the south flank, opposite the gateway, is, as usual, the chapel. The latter, with the tall figure of Gaṅgā flanking the door-frame, contains a large image of Buddha seated on a *siṃhāsana* in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* flanked on the left by the life-sized figure of Padmapāṇi, the latter's right hand in *vara-mudrā*. As at Ratnagiri (p. 229), the gateway of the monastery has two pillared porches, the front one projecting beyond the alignment of the outer periphery of the cells. Like Ratnagiri again, the walls of its front porch are embellished with figures, but these are of larger dimensions and represent mostly *yakshas*. The door-frame of the gateway, flanked on either side by large-sized *dvāra-pālas*, is elaborately carved. The rear porch, in one alignment with the cells of the front side, has in the right wall a figure of Pāñchika, also present in the rear porch of Monastery 1 of Ratnagiri; but at the latter place Pāñchika is in the niche of the left wall, the right wall having Hārītī. At the north-western corner of the monastery is the staircase leading, evidently, to an upper storey. By the side of the staircase is a secret chamber. Built during the reign of Mahāśivagupta Bālārjuna (first half of the seventh century A.D.), it continued to be in use for at least two centuries more.

Edging the eastern wall of the monastery and connected with it by a door is an annexe accommodating most probably the kitchen, refectory, bath, store-room and hall. A stone-paved court with low and paved benches on two and a half sides is an interesting feature.

To the east of the annexe, some yards away, is a tank, now dried up.

Nor far from this monastery is the second monastery of smaller dimensions. It is square on plan and consists of a front porch projecting from the northern wall, nine cells, a chapel and a pillared chamber. As usual, there is a pillared verandah facing a square courtyard. Like the other monastery, the basement below the brick walls, door-frames, kerbs, pillars and the pavement of the courtyard are of stone. There is a flight of steps at the north-east corner for going to the upper storey. In the chapel is an image of Buddha in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* in the company of Padmapāṇi, the latter standing. On the courtyard was found an image of Hārītī. This monastery, too, has an annexe which is entered through a doorway from the eastern end of its northern verandah.

The antiquities unearthed are fairly prolific. Particularly noteworthy are the bronze images. One of them is plated with gold. These images as well as the hoard discovered earlier prove that Sirpur, like Nālandā, was a centre of bronze-casting. The bronze images, mostly representing Buddha, Padmapāṇi, Vajrapāṇi, Mañjuśrī and Tārā, with their beautiful facial expression, graceful pose and modelling, large eyes inlaid with silver and lips of red copper, bespeak the consummate skill of the local bronze-casters, the name of one of them being Dronāditya.

Amongst other antiquities found here mention may be made of various kinds of tools necessary for agriculture, smithy, goldwork and pottery (evidently practised by the residents), stone images, tablets inscribed with the Buddhist creed and texts, a miniature crystal *stūpa*, a gilt *vajra* and a Chinese copper coin of Kai Yuan (A.D. 713-41). The discovery of the last is particularly interesting, as it shows that the establishment was important enough to attract foreign pilgrims.



## E. DHAMNAR

On the flat-topped laterite hill of Dhamnar (lat.  $24^{\circ} 12' N.$ ; long.  $75^{\circ} 30' E.$ ; District Mandasor), 12 miles west of the Shamgarh railway-station, once flourished a large Buddhist establishment. The name of the hill is evidently after the temple of Dharmanātha or Dharmarājesvara, a *liṅga*, which has appropriated a beautiful rock-cut Vaiṣṇava temple. The caves, of which nearly fifty are fully exposed, are generally found in the precipitous faces near the top, the latter connected in many places with the courts in front of the caves by means of rock-cut stairs.

This group is noted more for the striking peculiarity of the layout of some of its caves than for sculptural embellishments. The rough pitted surface of the rock stood, no doubt, in the way of finer carvings, and it is not known if the ornamentation was originally attempted in plaster with which the faces of the caves were originally covered.

Though images of Buddha are fashioned, there is a distinct predilection towards *stūpas*, the number of which, as free-standing in the open, as objects of worship within sanctuaries and as reliefs within niches, is quite overwhelming. These *stūpas* have a well-developed form. They generally consist of a conspicuous moulded base, mostly square and rarely circular, a tall cylindrical drum with a set of mouldings at the base and at the top, a plain globular, bulbous or elongated hemispherical dome and a square *harmikā* with corbels above and crowned by one or triple umbrella. Very rarely, the façade of the base between the two sets of mouldings is divided by pilasters into compartments, the latter containing niches for images. The forms of the *stūpas* as well as the relieved images point towards a date in the Gupta age, though the possibility of an earlier nucleus for the establishment cannot be entirely ruled out, particularly in view of the plain cells, the date of which always remains uncertain.

The plan of Cave 14 (XIII of Cunningham) is singular. In the centre of a closed but hypaethral oblong court is a fairly-large rock-cut *stūpa*. Approach to the court is through a front chamber. At the back of the *stūpa*, beyond the court, is a flat-roofed oblong sanctuary with a door and a processional path around it. In the sanctuary is a colossal image of Buddha (probably in preaching attitude), seated in *vajra-paryāṅkāsa* on a cushion above a seat supported by lions, carved against the back wall. Flanking the door is the relief of a large standing Buddha on either side of the exterior face, while over the door is a projected *chaitya*-window. The processional path has a roof on three sides, the fourth (front) side being the court itself. Its three walls are relieved with a number of figures, generally of Buddha, both seated and standing in different *mudrās* and one in a reclining pose depicting the *parinirvāṇa*. The sinister wall of the court has been excavated into two sanctuaries and a niche with a pot-bellied figure in *bhadrāsana*. One of the sanctuaries contains a rock-cut *stūpa* in the centre of the oblong chamber; over its door-frame, set back at the top corners, is the relief of a *stūpa* flanked by a *chaitya*-window on either side. The remaining sanctuary is a smaller chamber with a figure of Buddha in *bhadrāsana* carved against the back wall. The dexter wall of the court has a door leading outside and a niche with a seated image of Buddha.

Cave 13 (Cave XII of Cunningham) is a *chaitya-griha* with a court in front. Entered



by a single colossal door, the *chaitya-griha* is divided into an oblong flat-roofed nave and an apse (semicircular at the back) by two pilasters, their inner sides arched. Over the pilasters runs a beam which passes over the *chhatra* of the *stūpa* and supports the ceiling. The shape of the highly-elongated *stūpa* slightly differs from the prevalent type. The tapering cylindrical drum over the octagonal base is capped by a set of mouldings, and the dome presents the shape of the three-fourths of an egg.

The layout of Cave 12 (XI of Cunningham) is particularly interesting. It consists of a flat-roofed free-standing apsidal *chaitya-griha*, roughly occupying the centre of a hypaethral oblong court, beyond which, on three sides are pillared verandahs with ranges of cells, not always of uniform dimensions, at their back. Of the three cells of the sinister flank, the central one, a chapel, contains a rock-cut *stūpa*, the latter's front having a relief of Buddha. One of the four cells of the back row is the largest of the group and distinguished for its vaulted ceiling and two benches along the side walls. The dexter flank has six cells, one of which is a chapel with two high reliefs of Buddha seated on a moulded pedestal carved against the back wall. The pillars of the back verandah have moulded square bases, shafts first square and next octagonal, and rolled-up bracket-capitals, the last very common in this series. The shafts of the pillars of the dexter wing are, however, oblong. These pillars are connected by a parapet relieved with the motif of a balustraded railing and pierced with entrance-openings at intervals, this arrangement also being a feature of this group. There are reliefs of *stūpas* alternating with *chaitya*-windows on the architrave over the pillars of the back flank. Further, the façade of the projected eaves over the architrave has a row of ten *chaitya*-windows with a central *stūpa*. The *chaitya-griha* (photo 80) with a single door is preceded by a flat-roofed pillared verandah with a back-rest between the pillars and pilasters; the verandah itself is approached from a brick-paved lime-concreted court with side walls. Internally also it is apsidal, and its ceiling is vaulted, the portion above the nave being braced with arched beams springing from two horizontal architraves which project from the vertical side walls. At the back of the apse is the *stūpa* of neat execution, but of the usual pattern with an elongated hemispherical dome. In front of this cave are a few small free-standing *stūpas*.

Cave 11 (X of Cunningham) consists of a court, a pillared verandah and a hall at the back. The flat ceiling of the hall is supported by a network of beams resting on two rows of two pillars and pilasters each. These pillars as well as those of the verandah have moulded bases, oblong tapering shafts and the usual rolled-up bracket-capitals. Each pilaster of the verandah is connected with the adjoining pillar by a parapet relieved on the exterior by a balustraded railing.

Cave 9 (VIII of Cunningham) is a *chaitya-griha*, oblong on plan, but with a vaulted ceiling, with an arrangement of beams similar to that of the *chaitya-griha* of Cave 12 and with a single door and a stereotyped *stūpa*. It is fronted by a pillared verandah resembling that of Cave 11. The flat eaves in front of the verandah are supported by two pilasters with moulded bases and bracket-capitals at either end.

The plan of Cave 7 (VI of Cunningham) is again elaborate. It consists of a verandah, similar to that of Cave 11 and approached from the court by a staircase, with a cell at its dexter end, and a pillared hall with ranges of cells on three sides, the central cell of



the back side being a sanctuary with a *stūpa* as the object of worship. The hall, with a central door and two flanking windows, is similar to that of Cave 11. Its ceiling is flat except for a small section between the back pillars and the door of the sanctuary, which is, curiously enough, arched. Over the moulded architrave above the pillars and pilasters of the verandah is a row of six *chaitya*-windows with a central *stūpa*.

Other caves are of little significance. They generally comprise a verandah, often open and sometimes closed, with one or more cells, the arrangement in the latter case being not always very symmetrical. The quadrangular layout is extremely rare. Some of the cells have recesses with rock-cut beds and pillows. There are also plain oblong excavations. The existence of *stūpas* in one of the cells of some of these caves, which otherwise look like dwelling ones, is curious. Besides these, there are small independent sanctuaries, often oblong and rarely apsidal, containing *stūpas*. As already noted, there are many free-standing rock-cut *stūpas*, often in groups.

Most of the caves, if not all, and the *stūpas* were plastered originally either with lime, sometime concreted, or with mud, the latter limited to the interior of the caves.

### 3. KASHMIR

Buddhism was introduced into Kashmir under the Maurya Emperor Aśoka by Madhyāntika (p. 10), the *thera* who converted Gandhāra.<sup>1</sup> At the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit, four *stūpas* in Kashmir were believed to have been erected by the Emperor over the corporeal remains of Buddha. The pilgrim further referred to a tooth-relic of Buddha in a *stūpa* attached to a monastery, containing about three hundred monks, situated 2 miles south-east of the new capital (identified with Srinagar). Kalhaṇa, the twelfth-century chronicler of Kashmir, says in his *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* that Aśoka, who founded the city of Śrinagarī (i.e. the old capital, identified with Pandrethan, p. 110), built a large number of *stūpas* at Śushkalettra (Hukhalitar where some Buddhist relics were found) and Vitastātra (Vithavutur) and at the latter place constructed a lofty *chaitya* within the precincts of the Dharmāranya-vihāra. To his son, Jalauka, though not an adherent of Buddhism, was due the Kṛtyāśrama-vihāra (Ki-tché of Wu-K'ong), the site of which has been identified with Kitsahom, 5 miles below Baramulla.

According to one tradition, recorded in details by Hiuen Tsang and Tibetan books, the Fourth Buddhist Council under the Kushān king Kanishka was held in Kashmir to reconcile the contradictory doctrines of the *Saṅgha*, then divided into eighteen sects. It prepared a large number of treatises and commentaries of the *Tripiṭaka*, the copies of which were engraved on copper-plates, placed in stone boxes and buried inside a *stūpa*, under the orders of Kanishka. According to Kalhaṇa, Buddhism was a vital religion during the reign of the Turushka (presumably Kushān) rulers Hushka (Huvishka?), Jushka (Vāsishka?) and Kanishka who founded three towns (*puras*) after their names and built many *chaityas* and associated structures at Śushkalettra and other places. Jushka further constructed a *vihāra* in his Jushkapura.

After a temporary reverse suffered at the hands of the anti-Buddhist Hūṇa king Mihirakula (first half of the sixth century A.D.), the religion enjoyed prosperity. The reign of Meghavāhana, who was brought from Gandhāra, a predominantly Buddhist land, was particularly memorable in this respect. He emulated the Bodhisattvas in his noble acts and prohibited slaughter of living creatures. His queens vied with one another in raising Buddhist edifices. Thus, Queen Amṛitaprabhā built the Amṛita-bhavana-vihāra (identified with the ruins at Antabavan, 3 miles north of Srinagar) for the use of the foreign *bhikshus*. The spiritual preceptor of her father, a native of Loh (Ladakh), constructed a *stūpa*, called Lo-stonpā. In her Nadavana-vihāra Queen Yūkadevī accommodated, curiously enough, not only the *bhikshus* but also those Buddhists who were 'in possession of wives, children, cattle and property'. Queen Indradevī founded the Indradevī-bhavana-vihāra with a quadrangle and a *stūpa*. Similarly, Queen Khādanā and Sammā established *vihāras* in their own names, the former probably at Khadaniyar (4 miles below Baramulla).

<sup>1</sup> In the early historical period Kashmir, in spite of its natural seclusion amidst snow-clad ranges, was intimately linked with Gandhāra. This association accounts for the affinity between their Buddhist architectural and sculptural forms.



Several ministers of Yudhishthira, son of Pravarasena II (first half of the sixth century A.D.), erected *vihāras* and *chaityas*. Amṛitaprabhā, Queen of Raṇāditya, a later king, placed a fine image of Buddha in the *vihāra* made by Bhinnā, Queen of Meghāvāhana. During the reign of Vikramāditya, son of Raṇāditya, his minister Galūna constructed a *vihāra* in the name of his wife Ratnāvalī. The queen of the first Kārkoṭa Durlabhavardhana (second quarter of the seventh century A.D.), who was the son-in-law of Bālāditya, brother of Vikramāditya, built the Anaṅga-bhavana-*vihāra*.

Thanks to the royal patronage and the zeal of the monks, Kashmir became an important centre of Buddhist Sanskrit learning. Not only did it receive cordially and satisfy the spiritual need of the waves of aspirants from abroad, but it also sent out the children of the soil to propagate the faith in distant lands like Central Asia, China and Tibet.

During his stay of two years in Kashmir, Hsuen Tsang saw Buddhism in a flourishing condition, with one hundred monasteries teeming with five thousand monks. While in the capital (modern Srinagar) of the State, he spent the first night in the Jayendra-*vihāra* (unidentified) established with a colossal image of Buddha by Jayendra, the maternal uncle of Pravarasena II. The king, extremely hospitable to the pilgrim, invited him to reside in his palace itself and allotted as many as twenty clerks, besides attendants, to copy, for him, the Buddhist texts.

Many subsequent rulers also patronized Buddhism. The most renowned of them was Lalitāditya Mukṭāpīḍa (first half of the eighth century A.D.) of the Kārkoṭa dynasty, who according to Kalhaṇa, built a monastery, Rāja-*vihāra*, with an extensive quadrangle (*chatur-sālā*), a large *chaitya* (chapel) and a colossal copper image of Buddha in his capital Parihāsapura (identified with modern Paraspura, p. 112). The king is credited with the construction of a colossal *vihāra* (possibly Moung-ti-*vihāra* of Wu-K'ong) together with a *stūpa* at Hushkapura (pp. 111 and 112). He also built another *vihāra*, the Kayya-*vihāra*, where resided Sarvajñamitra, the author of the *Sragdharā-stotra*. Lalitāditya's Tukhāra minister Chaṅkuṇa had a great leaning towards Buddhism. At Parihāsapura he set up a lofty *stūpa* (p. 112), a monastery, called Chaṅkuṇa-*vihāra*, and golden images. He also built a second *vihāra* with a *chaitya* in the old capital. The image of Buddha, brought on the back of an elephant from Magadha, which Lalitāditya gave to Chaṅkuṇa, was probably enshrined in this *vihāra*, as it existed in the time of Kalhaṇa's writing the chronicle (circa A.D. 1149-50). Chaṅkuṇa's son-in-law, too, constructed a *vihāra*.

From the account of the Chinese traveller Wu-K'ong, who went to Kashmir in A.D. 759 and studied there for four years Sanskrit and the *Vinayas* of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, it appears that the country was a great repository of Buddhist Sanskrit learning and a stronghold of the Mūlasarvāstivādin School, which is also substantiated by the manuscripts (p. 113) found at Gilgit. Among the three hundred monasteries he specifically mentioned Ngo-mi-to-po-wan, Ngo-nan-i, Kī-tché, Nao-ye-le, Je-je, Ye-li-t'e-le and K'o-toen, besides the Moung-ti-*vihāra* where he resided. He also referred to a number of *stūpas* and images.

King Jayāpīḍa, an illustrious grandson of Lalitāditya, set up a large *vihāra* and three images of Buddha. Probably Śāntiprabha took up his residence here along with his disciples at this time.



The subsequent history of Kashmir also saw Buddhism flourishing side by side with Brahmanical cults like Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, very often claiming the same persons as their patrons and votaries. From the accounts of Kalhaṇa it appears that there was amity between the adherents of the different faiths. The kings and their officials, even in spite of their Brahmanical leanings, were unbiased enough to lavish their bounties on the Buddhist establishments. Instances of kings like Kshemagupta (A.D. 950-58), who burnt the Jayendra-vihāra, mentioned above, where his enemy had taken refuge, appropriated thirty-six villages belonging to it and utilized the brass of the enshrined image in a temple of Śiva, and Kalasa (A.D. 1063-89), who seized both the Brahmanical and Buddhist brass and copper images, were extremely rare. Even these kings, who were greedy and dissolute like many other rulers of Kashmir, were not actuated by a determined anti-Buddhist policy. Diddā (A.D. 950-1003), Queen of Kshemagupta, erected a *vihāra* in her name. A bronze image of Lokeshvara in the company of two goddesses, consecrated in her reign, is now in the Srinagar Museum (photo 81). Even Harsha (A.D. 1089-1101), son of Kalasa, who, noted for his sacrilegious confiscations, robbed the temples of the images for their metal-value, spared the two colossal images of Buddha at Parihāsa-pura and Srinagar. It was probably during his reign that three distinguished teachers, Śākyamati, Śilabhadra and Yaśomitra, the last noted for his commentary on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya*, resided in Kashmir.

That the Buddhists, with their noble way of life, commanded respect even in the twelfth century A.D. is evident not only from the respectful tone of Kalhaṇa in regard to them but also his eyewitness account of the edifices erected in his time. Jayamati, Queen of Uchchala (A.D. 1101-11), built a *vihāra*. The king himself commenced a *vihāra* in the name of his sister Sullā, but died before he could finish it and make any endowment. His brother, King Sussala (A.D. 1112-20 and 1121-28), reconstructed the Diddā-vihāra which had been burnt down by an accidental conflagration. The reign of Jayasimha (A.D. 1128-55), Sussala's son, was particularly favourable to Buddhism, as he, along with his queen and officials, actively interested himself in the construction of Buddhist buildings. The king completed not only the Sullā-vihāra started by his uncle but the Bijjā-vihāra, commenced by Dhanya, and made permanent endowments in favour of them. His queen, Ratnādevī, built a new *vihāra*. His minister, Rilhaṇa, founded a *vihāra* at Bhālerakaprapā in honour of his deceased wife, Sussalā, who herself had renovated the dilapidated Chaṅkuṇa-vihāra, noted above, by building a stone shrine and residential and other structures. Chintā, the wife of General Udaya, was credited with the construction of an imposing *vihāra* on the bank of the Vitastā (Jhelum), while Bhūtṭa built *vihāras* in the town Bhūtṭapura founded by him.

As late as A.D. 1197 a brick *vihāra* of Lokanātha, which had originally been of wood and burnt down during the reign of Simha (Jayasimha?), was built near Arigom, 15 miles south-west of Srinagar, where an inscription to that effect was discovered.

Buddhism did not long survive the Muslim conquest of the valley in the fourteenth century A.D. The first few Muslim rulers, however, respected the native tradition, usages and practices. Thus, Shihābu'd-Dīn (A.D. 1354-73), in spite of the instigation of his minister, did not melt a brass image of Buddha. But his enlightened policy was not



followed afterwards, and the faith succumbed to ruthless persecution at the hands of Sikandar (A.D. 1389-1413) and his successor 'Alī Shāh (A.D. 1413-20).

The birthday of Buddha finds a place in the calendars of the Brahmīns of Kashmir. This is not surprising, as Buddha was accepted as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu even one century before Kalhana, as attested by Kshemendra's devoting a canto of his *Daśāvatāra-charita* to the life of Buddha. The *Nilamata-purāṇa* of Kashmir enjoins prescriptions with regard to the celebration of Buddha's birthday.

Notwithstanding the long and prosperous career of the faith, Buddhist monuments are not many. Of the extant ones again, only the plinths and the lower portions of the superstructure have come down to us. Even these little vestiges, particularly the *stūpas* with their terraced bases and ornamental drum surrounded by enclosures, exhibit a distinct resemblance to the Buddhist architecture as practised in Gandhāra. The affinity is more pronounced in the terracotta decoration of the walls. The sensitively-fashioned towering figures of Buddha and other attending personages, forming part of bold compositions, from sites like Ushkura (p. 112), Harwan (p. 111) and Akhnur (19 miles north-west of Jammu town) were executed in the same art-tradition as the latest reliefs on the walls of late edifices of Taxila and other analogous sites. Indeed, the resemblance is so close that the art-critics are led to presume that the artists of Gandhāra, after the close of their *ateliers* due to the waning of Buddhism in their country, resorted to the monasteries of Kashmir only to receive a ready welcome.<sup>2</sup>

#### A. PANDRETHAN

Pandrethan (lat. 34° 3' N.; long. 74° 51' E.; District Srinagar), on the bank of the Jhelum, 3 miles south-east of Srinagar, represents the ancient capital, Purāṇādhiṣṭhāna, believed to have been founded by Aśoka under the name of Śrīnagarī. When Pravarasena II shifted the capital to the present town of Srinagar, the ancient Śrīnagarī received the appellation of Purāṇādhiṣṭhāna (old capital).

Excavations at the ill-defined ruins here revealed two extremely dilapidated stone *stūpas* besides a rubble enclosure, probably the remains of a monastery. Both these *stūpas* were enclosed by compound-walls. The ground-plan of only one of them, though stripped of facing stones, could be ascertained. Of the usual style of Kashmir, it had a base, cruciform on ground-plan, with three angular offsets and four re-entering angles between the central projections, 72 ft. from one end to the other. The drum of the *stūpa* appears to have been embellished with sculptures, of which the figures of Padmapāni (photo 82) with a rosary in his right hand, of about the eighth century A.D., and standing Buddha in *abhaya-mudrā* and a fragmentary relief depicting the birth of Buddha were found near by. The other *stūpa*, to its west, preserves only the fragments of its stairs on the western and the northern sides. Both these *stūpas* yielded small hemispherical stone objects, probably stone miniatures of *stūpas*, clay specimens of which were found within *stūpas* of Paharpur (p. 243) and other places.

<sup>2</sup> *Marg*, VIII, no. 2, 1955, p. 59.



## B. HARWAN

Harwan (lat.  $34^{\circ} 11' N.$ ; long.  $74^{\circ} 53' E.$ ; District Srinagar), identified with Kalhana's *Shad-arhat-vana* (the grove of six saints), where the Buddhist teacher Nāgārjuna of the Kushān age was believed to have resided, lies 7 miles to the north-north-east of Srinagar. The establishment on the slopes of a hill, overlooking the Dal-Lake, originated probably during the Kushān times and flourished for a few centuries thereafter.

The focus of the excavated remains, situated on the higher reaches of the hill, is a large structure of diaper-pebble masonry, the characteristic technique of many a building at Taxila. Apsidal on the exterior, internally it consists of a circular sanctum preceded by an oblong hall as in the apsidal structure of Sirkap (pp. 124 and 125), but it lacks the porch of the latter. The courtyard around is unique for its spacious floor, made of large moulded terracotta tiles (photo 85). These tiles are decorated in low relief with queer arrays of different patterns, both indigenous and foreign, animals and figures of diverse nationalities in various roles. They bear Kharoshthī numerals, evidently stamped for the guidance in respect of the composition. At the back of the courtyard is a long platform, its facing also made of tiles depicting a central frieze of emaciated seated ascetics, each within a compartment, bordered below by a well-executed row of geese and at the top men and women in balcony (photo 85). The façade of the apsidal structure is presumed to have also been embellished with terracotta panels.

On a lower terrace are the square base, in three tiers, of a *stūpa* enclosed by a compound-wall and the ruins of a few structures and enclosure-walls. The *stūpa* was posterior to Toramāṇa, the latter's coin found in its foundation. Its front projection accommodates three stairs, in one alignment, the topmost stair leading to the topmost terrace. Some idea about its missing superstructure can be had from a few plaques, bearing miniature replicas with the Buddhist creed below, found near it. The base of these miniature *stūpas*, too, is in three terraces, with three flights of steps in one continuous line. They have a faceted drum relieved with friezes and mouldings and a low cylindrical dome crowned by a conspicuous series of gradually-diminishing umbrellas not less than ten in number. The lowest umbrella, larger in diameter than the dome itself, is sustained by a host of struts radiating from the top of the dome. The topmost tiny umbrella is capped by a cone, from the top of which issue streamers. The entire scheme is, thus, dominated by the *chhatrāvali*. On the topmost terrace of the replicas are two columns crowned by a lion, one on either side.

The area around the *stūpa* produced, besides these clay votive plaques, a large number of the limbs of terracotta human figures and curls, also of terracotta, belonging to the heads of the images of Buddha.

## C. USHKURA

The ruins at Ushkura (lat.  $34^{\circ} 12' N.$ ; long.  $74^{\circ} 22' E.$ ; District Baramulla), probably the site of the ancient Hushkapura or the city established by Hushka (Huvishka), lie at the entrance to the valley through the north-western Baramulla Pass, 31 miles to the west-north-west of Srinagar. The only excavated building here represents the ruined cruciform



base of a stone structure, presumably the *stūpa* erected by Lalitāditya (p. 108). The quadrangle around it is surrounded by a wall of stone chips in mud. The extraordinary thickness of the base of the wall has led to the presumption of the existence of cells along the inner periphery.

That the Buddhist edifices at Ushkura went back to earlier days is attested by the fact that Hiuen Tsang, who spent a night at Hushkapura on his entry into the valley through the Baramulla Pass, saw a flourishing Buddhist establishment at the place. The region has not been properly surveyed, and no remains, apart from the *stūpa*, have been excavated. But the *stūpa* itself was built over scanty earlier foundations, and outside its compound-wall, on the front (north) side were found terracotta figures executed in the style of the latest Gandhāra stucco reliefs. It appears that the façade of the entire front wall, which faced the Jhelum, was once embellished with a spectacular mural relief, in terracotta, having a colossal image of Buddha and other figures.

#### D. PARASPORA

Situated at a distance of 14 miles to the north-west of Srinagar, Paraspora Pargana (lat. 34° 8' N.; long. 74° 38' E.; District Baramulla) has been identified with the ancient Parihāsapura, the capital of Lalitāditya (p. 108). On one of the *karewas* (plateaux) lying between the marshes of the Panzinor and the village Haratrath are three Buddhist edifices with a smooth ashlar facing of limestone: (i) the imposing base of a *stūpa*, identified with Chaṅkūṇa's *stūpa* (p. 108); (ii) a monastery, believed to be the Rāja-vihāra of Lalitāditya (p. 108), which was burnt down by the troops of Harsha (A.D. 1089-1101) in the false impression that the pretender Uchchala had taken shelter in it; and (iii) a temple.

The base of the *stūpa* (photo 84), cruciform on ground-plan with angular projections between the central projections (about 128 ft. from one end to the other), is in two tiers, the upper about 12 ft. and the lower 8 ft. 9 in. high. The tops of these tiers served, no doubt, as processional paths. Both of them were provided with a flight of steps in the central projections facing the cardinal points. The front flanking walls of the stairs had a square panel with a placid figure of a bejewelled atlante, while the moulded sides have elephants with long foliated tails (*makaras*?). Girdled by a torus-moulding in the middle, the terraces were crowned by a cornice of a decorated torus. Several of the stones bear the word *chaṅku*, apparently the shortened form of Chaṅkūṇa.

An enormous heap of undressed large-sized stones lies at the top of the ruined base, indicating that the core of the *stūpa* was of rubble. In the centre, amidst the débris, is a square massive stone block with a central hole, 5 ft. deep; it probably contained the bottom end of the shaft of the crowning umbrella. The missing drum was decorated presumably with trefoil niches, containing figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, seated or standing, executed in the style of the late Gupta or early mediaeval tradition of Sarnath. One of the figures of Buddha has a bejewelled crown on the head. The *stūpa* was enclosed by an oblong compound-wall.

The monastery, to the south of the *stūpa*, presents the normal quadrangular plan, with



twenty-six cells including the entrance-porch, fronted by a running verandah, the latter surrounding an open paved oblong courtyard. The cell in the centre of the back wall is larger in size than the rest and was probably used as a shrine. It is preceded by a line of three cells, opening, in the front, into a common vestibule, this projecting forward into the courtyard. Bedded in the floor of the courtyard is a stone trough, connected by a channel made through the floor of one of the cells. The monastery bears traces of subsequent repairs.

The square sanctum of the temple, situated further south in the centre of a spacious enclosure, stands on a double-tiered platform and is surrounded by a *pradakshina-patha*. Within the sanctum is a monolithic slab, 14 ft.  $\times$  12 ft. 6 in.  $\times$  5 ft. 2 in., on which probably rested the enshrined image. The four pillars at the corners evidently sustained the ceiling. The roof is presumed to have been of the pyramidal type as common in the contemporary Brahmanical temples of Kashmir. The sanctum is preceded by a vestibule, its entrance capped by a trefoil arch within a triangular pediment. The stair giving access to the top of the platform was originally decorated, as in the *stūpa*, with atlantes. The platform had moulded pilasters at corners and a cornice with a string-course of *kirti-mukhas*, each capped by a floral motif, alternating with trefoil arches.

#### E. MALANGPUR

The Buddhist site of Malangpur (lat. 33° 53' N.; long. 74° 59' E.; District Anantnag) is located at a distance of 21 miles south-east of Srinagar. Perched on the top of a spur is a *stūpa* reduced to its base. The latter is square on ground-plan with two projections on either side and stairs, each facing a cardinal point. The exterior of the flanking walls of these stairs is relieved with a scene depicting the mortal pursuit of a man by a fabulous hybrid animal with a beak, horns and wings.

#### F. GILGIT

The Buddhist remains in Gilgit (lat. 35° 55' N.; long. 74° 17' E.) attracted attention in 1931, when at a place called Naupur near Gilgit Cantonment was accidentally found a mass of birch-bark and a few paper manuscripts. These were entombed in a circular chamber, 7 ft. 9½ in. in diameter, inside the dome of a *stūpa*, a practice widely current in Central Asia and Eastern Turkestan. The manuscripts, ascribable to the sixth or seventh century A.D., have since become famous as Gilgit Manuscripts. They are supremely important, as they present Sanskrit texts, many of which are known only through their Chinese and Tibetan translations. Further, they are the first of their kind discovered on the soil of India. The texts include a large number of *sūtras*, *Prajñāpāramitā* (photo 83), *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* and above all the Sanskrit *Vinaya-piṭaka* of the Mūla-Sarvāstivādins. Many of the manuscripts bear the names and *gotras* of the donors, one of them being Śrīdeva Sāhi Surendra Vikramāditya Nanda, a Sāhi king probably ruling over the region around Gilgit.

Apart from the manuscripts, the relic-chamber yielded hundreds of small votive



clay *stūpas*, containing within tiny tablets inscribed with the Buddhist creed, and relieved plaques.

This *stūpa* forms a group with three other *stūpas*, all with a double basement, in a north-to-south row, of which the northern two with their hemispherical dome are well-preserved. The third, the largest, which yielded the manuscripts, was 39 ft. to 49 ft. high. Its lower basement is 19 ft. 10½ in. square, while the receding upper has around it an open terrace, 1 ft. 11½ in. wide. The centre of the relic-chamber is occupied by five wooden posts, of which the central one, piercing through the *harmikā*, supported the *chhatra*.

Around Gilgit are also located other Buddhist remains, comprising figures of Buddha, including rock-cut ones, and *stūpas*, at various places including Yasin and the mouth of the Kirgah Nullah.

#### 4. THE NORTH-WEST (WEST PAKISTAN)

Buddhist sites of the north-west are mainly concentrated in the region known in ancient days as Gandhāra. The latter, on the authority of the early foreign writers, was the territory between modern Lamghan and Jalalabad on the west, the hills of Swat and Buner on the north, the Indus on the east and the hills of Kalabag on the south. But according to the indigenous literary data, it extended further towards the east and included the Rawalpindi District. Three of its capital-cities were Pushkalāvati (Charsada<sup>1</sup> and Prang), Purushapura (Peshawar) and Takshasilā (Taxila), the first two to the west and the last to the east of the Indus.

As in other parts, except the ancient Madhyadeśa, Buddhism seems to have reached Gandhāra during the reign of Aśoka (p. 10), whose connection with this part of the country had started even before his accession to the throne of Pātaliputra, as he was the governor of Takshasilā, the capital of the eastern region of Gandhāra, under his father Bindusāra (circa 300-273 B.C.). During his imperial rule, he chose Taxila as a place for the erection of one of his *stūpas*. Hiuen Tsang saw a few more Aśokan *stūpas* near Pushkalāvati and Po-lu-sha; the latter place has generally been identified with Shahbazgarhi (District Peshawar). Shahbazgarhi and Manshera (District Hazara) bear the Kharoshthi versions of the Fourteen Rock-Edicts of Aśoka.

There is no definite information regarding the shape of the Aśokan *stūpa* at Taxila, the only available indication of its site being that a vast Buddhist establishment, with an enormous *stūpa* as the nucleus, has been called Dharmarājikā<sup>2</sup> in inscriptions found at the site. Nothing, however, in the extant Dharmarājikā *stūpa* is really of the period of Aśoka, except possibly its base (p. 125). An important *stūpa* must have ancillary structures, e.g. the place for the residence of its attendants and worshippers, but no trace of these of this period is available. Nor is there any definitely Mauryan Buddhist monument, located so far anywhere else in Gandhāra.

Being situated at the gate of the north-west, Gandhāra was exposed to waves of foreign invaders—first the Indo-Greeks who supplanted the Mauryas in this region, next the

<sup>1</sup> Charsada, about 16 miles north-east of Peshawar, was once an affluent Buddhist centre. Hiuen Tsang refers to two Aśokan *stūpas*, one where four Past Buddhas preached, and the other marking the spot where Buddha, as a Bodhisattva in one of his previous births, is said to have made the gift of his eyes. The location of the latter has been suggested inside the lofty mound of Bala Hisar, representing the ancient acropolis. The dilapidated monastery by the side of the *stūpa* of eye-gift, had, in the days of Hiuen Tsang, only a few monks, all Hinayānists. Trial excavations of 1902-03 (*An. Rep. Arch. Surv. Ind.*, 1902-03, pp. 141-84) at the mounds of Mir Ziyarat, Palatu-dheri and Ghaz-dheri laid bare a considerable number of Gandhāra sculptures, besides a 32-ft. square base of a *stūpa* with relics at the last mound. Several sculptures, including a fragment of an image of Buddha of Mathura workshop, have recently been unearthed at Shaikhān Dheri near Bala Hisar.

<sup>2</sup> The *Divyāvadāna* says that Dharmarāja Aśoka erected eighty-four thousand Dharmarājikā *stūpas* from the finds of some mullers presumed the existence of an Aśokan pillar by the side of the Dharmarājikā *stūpa* from the finds of some mullers of the Chunar sandstone and fragments of the same stone in Bhīr Mound. These mullers, according to him, were fashioned out of the broken pieces of the pillar; J. Marshall, *Taxila*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1951), p. 235.



Scytho-Parthians and ultimately the Kushāns—in the centuries immediately preceding and following Christ. But these political upheavals had no adverse effect on the religion which, on the contrary, due to its catholicity and ethical character, received a great stimulus at the hands of these foreigners.

A large number of Kharoshthī inscriptions, dated in the reign of these Indianized foreign rulers, show that both the rulers, including their officials, and the ruled vied with one another in erecting Buddhist edifices, not unoften accompanied by lavish endowments. One at least of the Indo-Greek rulers, Menander, is immortalized in the Buddhist text, *Milinda-pañha*, as a convert to Buddhism. During his reign corporeal relics of Śākyamuni were enshrined by one of his subordinates in the Bajaur area. A Greek called Theodoros established the relics of Buddha in the Swat valley. The Taxila copper-plate inscription, dated in the reign of the Indo-Scythic king Maues (first century B.C.), records the enshrinement of the relics of Buddha and the erection of a monastery by Pātika, son of a Kshatrapa, a Śaka.

Under the patronage of these alien rulers Gandhāra played an important role in spreading Buddhism to Afghanistan and even beyond to Central Asia. Many are the Buddhist remains in these regions, generally dating from the first century A.D., though a few may be somewhat earlier. Of the sites in these region, mention may be made of those at Jalalabad, Hadda and Bamiyan; the last place famous for its caves, paintings and colossal rock-cut figures, one of them reaching a height of over 180 ft.

The diverse ethnic influx and subsequent fusion with the native population are manifest in the Buddhist architecture and art of this region as well. The Greek motifs and architectural forms like Corinthian pillars, pediments, entablature and Classical mouldings, were freely adopted in the Buddhist monuments. The most permanent record of this intermingling of the indigenous and Hellenistic cultures, however, is the hybrid Gandhāra art reflecting the general aesthetic vision and form, art-style and art-technique of the contemporary north-west frontier of India. Remarkable for its individuality and extensiveness,<sup>2</sup> it registers the union of the Buddhist ideals, legends and iconography with Hellenistic art-technique and figure-style. The life of Buddha (photos 3, 5, 18 and 19) interested the Gandhāra artists more than the *Jātakas*. The figures of a few elementary Bodhisattvas, Hārītī and her consort Pāñchika also formed favourite subjects of the artists. The physiognomy of the early images of Buddha bears Hellenistic features, though the iconography conforms strictly to the requirements of the Indian idea of a superman (*mahā-purusha*) with all the characteristic marks (*lakṣaṇas*). In spite of the foreign apparel, the sculptures are essentially Indian in spirit.

Gandhāra art had two distinct phases—Early and Later Schools—differentiated not only in style but also in the material as well. The medium of the Early School was chiefly schist of the quarries of Swat and Buner, which gave way largely to lime-stucco, clay and terracotta, often painted in gold and polychrome, in the Later School. With the use of the more pliable material went hand in hand development of softer and more

<sup>2</sup> This art was extensively practised in Swat, Buner and Bajaur, beyond the limits of the traditional Gandhāra.



delicate plastic treatment. The figures were endowed with a certain warmth of feeling and sensuousness, evidently derived from Āryāvarta. Particularly remarkable are the images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas of the best tradition of the Later School, which display some sparks of spirituality, compassion and dignified composure—the hallmark of the Gupta art-idiom.

There is a great divergence of views about the origin and the fountain-head of the Gandhāra art. While some think that it was the direct outcome of the Greek domination over north-western India during the two centuries before Christ, others, however, point out that there is no datable product of that art during the period. It is likely that the beginning of the great Gandhāra art took place under the philhellenic Parthians, though it must be said that definitely-datable images of Buddha can be ascribed only to the Kushān period. Some think that foreign elements in Gandhāra art could not have been directly derived from Greece which was waning during the period, but from Rome, which was all powerful at that time and had inherited its art-traditions from Greece. The fact seems to be that the inspiration of Gandhāra art was derived directly neither from Greece nor from Rome but from West Asia where a provincial Classical art had come into being, and with which the Parthians and their successors, the Kushāns, had intimate associations. This art, the impact of which spread beyond the confines of Gandhāra to an overwhelming extent, continued to prosper till the end of the fifth century A.D. when it received a great blow at the hands of another foreign horde, the Hūnas, who proved to have been anti-Buddhist.

Though the Buddhist establishments of Gandhāra did not thrive after the Hūna invasion, the religion continued to linger at some centres like Purushapura (pp. 118-20). Paintings of Śrī-Kanaka-chaitya of Purushapura-maṇḍala in Uttarāpatha and Lokanātha of Kūṭaparvata in Gandhāra-maṇḍala occur in the Cambridge University Library manuscript of A.D. 1015.

The north-west frontier region—the heart of Gandhāra—is studded with Buddhist remains. Here, as in Afghanistan, Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang saw many Buddhist establishments, the former in a flourishing condition and the latter in a general state of desertion and decay—the result of relentless depredations of the devastating hordes of the Hūnas towards the end of the fifth century A.D. According to Hiuen Tsang, the Hūna king Mihirakula (circa A.D. 515-30) destroyed one thousand six hundred Buddhist foundations, consisting of *stūpas* and monasteries, in Gandhāra.<sup>4</sup>

In the nineteenth century most of the *stūpa*-remains in Gandhāra were rifled for relic-caskets and statues by treasure-hunters and amateur archaeologists, who caused great injury to the monuments.

As places of worship, *stūpas* preponderated. Only the lower parts of the *stūpas* exist at present, and it is not possible to draw firm conclusion about their elevation when complete. Miniature *stūpas* (photo 36), however, furnish a rough idea about the characteristic types of Gandhāra. Both the traditional hemispherical and the tall cylindrical ones were in existence, typified respectively by the Dharmarājikā (photo 88) of Taxila and

<sup>4</sup> S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, 1 (London, 1884), p. 171.



Bhallar *stūpa* (p. 127), the former type being extremely rare. The early *stūpas*, e.g. Dharmarājikā at Taxila, had no square platform below the low drum. But with the passage of time the drum, which was made elongated and often fashioned in diminishing tiers, was set up on a squarish platform, the top of the latter, approached by steps, serving as the processional path. The faces of both the drum and the platform were often decorated with mouldings, pilasters and figures, including those of Buddha (photo 36). A further innovation was effected afterwards by making the platform rise in two or three receding terraces. In still later period the faces of the terraces and the drum were embellished with figures, generally in clay, terracotta or stucco.

Small shrines or chapels, containing images, existed at many places, but they were only subsidiary to the *stūpas* around which they were built. Full-fledged temples, the concomitant of image-worship, were not much in vogue; this is remarkable in a land which contributed not a little to the development of images of Buddha. The people satisfied their urge of worshipping Buddha in a human form not by installing his images in self-contained elaborate temples but by housing them in small shrines ancillary to the *stūpa* or by embellishing the *stūpa*-façade with them. In either case, the *stūpa* itself remained the chief object of worship, never rivalled by the temple.

Each Buddhist centre in Gandhāra consisted of one or more *stūpas* and monasteries. It appears that in Gandhāra the earliest monasteries were without a set plan and consisted of isolated structures with a few cells fronted by a common verandah. About the first century A.D. the regular quadrangular monastery often of more than one storey, the upper reached by a stair through a cell was introduced. The layout of the monasteries followed a predetermined pattern—*viz.* a square or oblong central court surrounded by a verandah and rows of living cells built at the back of the verandah and against the outer wall of the monastery. The plan, therefore, was not essentially different from that of the rest of India. The differentiae generally consisted of an enclosed bath-room in the court, probably necessitated by the rigorous climate of the region, and the almost invariable elaborate adjunct of an assembly-hall, kitchen, refectory, scullery, etc. (fig. 10, p. 39). Sometimes this adjunct formed one of the four sides of the quadrangle. In a few monasteries one of the cells would contain a small *stūpa*—probably a memorial to an important monk who lived there. It has been said that such well-protected monasteries originated in the north-west due to the exigencies of the climate and the ever-disturbed political condition of the region and from there spread to the rest of India. But the earlier and pre-Christian examples of such monasteries exist at Kondane (p. 162) and Pitalkhiora (p. 173) in the Deccan.

Of the hundreds of Buddhist sites and remains discovered in the north-west, only a few are briefly described below.

#### A. SHAH-JI-KI-DHERI, PESHAWAR

The most notable monument in Gandhāra was, according to the Chinese pilgrims, the *stūpa* erected by Kanishka at his capital Purushapura identified with Peshawar (lat. 34° 0' N.; long. 71° 37' E.). 'Of all *stūpas* and temples seen by the travellers, none can



compare with this in beauty of form and strength. Tradition says this is the highest of the towers in Jambudvīpa', remarked Fa-hien. Sung-yun, who saw the *stūpa* in the first quarter of the sixth century A.D., observed: 'Throughout the building he (*scil.* Kanishka) used carved wood; he constructed stairs to lead to the top. The roof consisted of every kind of wood. Altogether there were thirteen storeys; above which there was an iron pillar, three feet high with thirteen gilded circlets. Altogether the height from the ground was 700 feet.'

Hsien Tsang also gave a glowing description of this lofty structure. According to him, the *stūpa*, with a base of 150 ft. in five tiers, was 400 ft. high and was crowned by a succession of twenty-five gilt copper discs (i.e. umbrellas). He referred to a curious painting of the double-headed Buddha, 16 ft. high, on the south face of the stair to the *stūpa*. This *stūpa* was stated to have been burnt for the fourth time shortly before the visit of Hsien Tsang, who also saw the work of restoration in progress. Around the *stūpa* were myriads of small *stūpas* and some images of Buddha.

Making allowance for all exaggeration by devoted pilgrims, the *stūpa* must have been a grand edifice. Śrī-Kanaka-chaitya of Purushapura-maṇḍala in Uttarāpatha, illustrated in the Cambridge University Library manuscript (no. add. 1643) of A.D. 1015, evidently is identical with this *stūpa*.

The multi-storeyed monastery of Kanishka, to the west of the Great *Stūpa*, was already in ruins at the time of Hsien Tsang's visit, though it was occupied by a few Hinayānist monks. To this monastery probably repaired for study Viradeva, a native of Nagarahāra (Jalalabad), as attested by the Ghosrawa inscription of the time of Devapāla, the third Pāla king.

When the remains of the *stūpa*, locally known as Shah-ji-ki-dheri, were excavated, it was observed that the sides of its square plinth each measured 180 ft. All the sides had central projections, 43 ft. deep, these again having less conspicuous central projections (7 ft. deep) in the front. Each corner had a circular tower, an unusual feature also noticed at Building 43 at Sanchi. The plan was, thus, *pañcha-ratha* with circular projections at the corners. The core was constructed of radiating walls, as in the Dharmarājikā of Taxila (p. 125). The façades of the plinth, which was constructed of large blocks of roughly-dressed stones in combination with bricks, were decorated with figures of Buddha in stucco, arrayed between Indo-Corinthian pilasters.

In the relic-chamber, situated in the centre below the level of the brick pavement surrounding the *stūpa*, was discovered the famous inscribed casket (photo 86) of the Kushān ruler Kanishka. A copper coin of this king was found close to the relic-chamber. The cylindrical casket and its lid, with a diameter of 5 in. and a total height of 7½ in., are of an alloy in which copper predominates. On the lid is a haloed figure of Buddha seated on a high stool in *abhaya-mudrā* and attended by two standing figures (Śakra and Brahmā?) all in the round, and around its side is a series of swans. The cylinder bears three reliefs of seated Buddha, in the loops of a wavy garland supported by Erotes, worshippers, Sūrya, Chandra and a foreigner, presumably Kanishka himself. Inside it were a clay sealing with an elephant motif and a hexagonal crystal reliquary with three pieces of bone, believed to be of Buddha himself. The inscription on the casket says that



the gift was made for the acceptance of the Sarvāstivādin teachers. It also refers to Kanishka's *vihāra* in Mahāsena's *saṅghārāma*.

The excavation yielded a number of stone and stucco sculptures, the latter of inferior quality, and a clay tablet bearing the Buddhist creed in characters of the eighth or ninth century A.D.

Near by are the remains of a monastery with different levels of occupation.

## B. TAKHT-I-BAHI

The compact remains (photo 87) perched on a spur of the hill of Takht-i-Bahi (lat.  $34^{\circ} 17' N.$ ; long.  $71^{\circ} 57' E.$ ; District Peshawar), about 8 miles north-west of Mardan, are impressive. Their situation too, commanding a panoramic view of the plains below, is picturesque. The so-called Takht-i-Bahi inscription<sup>8</sup> records a dedication in the reign of the Indo-Parthian king Gandopheres (first half of the first century A.D.); in that case the nucleus of the establishment is pre-Christian.

Occupying the highest eminence is the pivot of attraction—an oblong *stūpa*-court, 56 ft. 6 in. (north-south) by 45 ft. 6 in., the result of a single well-planned scheme. In the middle of this court is the *stūpa*, raised on a platform (20 ft. 6 in. square), receding in three stages and with a total height of 8 ft. 6 in. The faces of the upper and the lower tiers are relieved with a row of pilasters. The top of this platform, which served as a processional path around the drum, was approached by a flight of steps, provided in the central projection of the north side, facing the entrance of the court. The superstructure of the *stūpa* has perished.

Against the periphery of the *stūpa*-court, except the front (north) side, is a line of small chapels, internally 5 ft. 6 in. by 4 ft. 10 in., entirely opening towards the court, there being an Indo-Corinthian pilaster on either side of the opening. The ceilings of these chapels are spanned by corbels, while the roofs are domical, flattened at the top externally. Above each of them is a narrow collar surmounted either by a second smaller dome or, as in an apsidal hall, by a vault, externally waggon-shaped and apsidal on plan with a trefoil opening on the façade and a pinnacle in the form of a mushroom above.

A long flight of steps from the centre of the north side of the *stūpa*-court descends immediately into a lower court, 116 ft. (east-west) by 50 ft. (north-south). The north, south and east flanks of this court have a range of narrow but high chapels, some standing to a height of 25 to 30 ft., each originally containing a colossal stucco image of Buddha. On the floor of this court are votive *stūpas*, generally with square bases. This lower court is particularly rich in its yield of loose sculptures of both stone and stucco, numbering several hundreds. Of different artistic values, they generally represent Buddha, sometimes in larger compositions depicting his life-scenes.

A second flight, directly opposite the first, against the northern wall of this lower court, leads to a monastery, which is, however, at a lower level than the *stūpa*-court.

<sup>8</sup> There is no absolute certainty about its provenance, the alternative site being Shahbazgarhi, 6½ miles east of Mardan.



This monastery, a compact self-sufficient unit, has dwelling cells with high walls on three sides of the central court and halls and chambers on the fourth (east) side probably meant for the block of kitchen, refectory, etc. The courtyard has a reservoir for water.

Immediately to the west of this monastery is a 50-ft. square structure enclosed by walls, as high as 30 ft., with a single entrance. Its purpose is unknown. To its south and abutting against the retaining wall of the lower court, but at a much lower level, were ten rooms, with corbelled ceilings, in two rows on either side of a narrow vaulted passage. The flat roof of this complex is at a level of the floor of the lower court.

To the south of this complex is a long vaulted passage descending into the valley below. Over the roof of this are two small *stūpas*, their bases luxuriantly embellished with stucco-work in the usual Gandhāra tradition. Immediately to their north is an imposing *stūpa*, the lower portion of the platform of which is preserved. The lowest terrace of this platform, 21 ft. square, depicts in stucco a row of crouching lions supporting an architrave, above which are panels arrayed between Indo-Corinthian pilasters. The central panel of the south face contains Hārītī and her consort, while the other panel of that side is adorned with beautiful figures of Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*.

The wall edging the south side of the court of this *stūpa* has at the base a low platform, on which are extant six pairs of stucco feet, each foot being 2 ft. long, of colossal standing figures of Buddha, the height of which must have been about 20 ft. The other detached limbs, including heads (2 ft. 2 in. high), were found near by.

#### G. SAHRIBAHLOL

Sahribahlol (lat. 34° 15' N.; long. 71° 58' E.), 2½ miles to the south-south-east of Takht-i-Bahi (p. 120), is one of the richest sites in stone and stucco sculptures, remarkable for their variety and state of preservation and running into thousands. These sculptures are now distributed over several museums, the Peshawar Museum having the largest collection. Though they display different artistic qualities, the number of admirable ones belonging to the best phase of the Gandhāra art is quite considerable. The flourishing period of the establishment coincided with the regime of the Kushāns and Kidāra-Kushāns.

The monuments are spread over an extensive area in many isolated units, round the central fortified mound, the latter presumably the ruins of an ancient city. But their preservation, unlike those of the neighbouring Takht-i-Bahi, is extremely unsatisfactory. It is due not merely to human cupidity and vandalism. It appears that most of the superstructures were either of weak construction due to a filling of rubble and earth or of perishable materials like timber, clay and mud bricks. The inevitable result of such construction is that almost all of them have been reduced to low mounds of earth and debris. Many of such mounds, on little excavations, have unfolded scores of loose sculptures which originally embellished the façades. As in other parts of Gandhāra, the ornamentation of the bases of the *stūpas*, of which many were traced here, and of the basement beneath the chapels was splendid and followed the usual patterns, as in vogue in Gandhāra, of representing Buddha in compartments, atlantes supporting the superstructure and similar motifs.



The mound, called Dhamami, to the east-south-east of the fortified mound, yielded a *stūpa*-court consisting of a tower-like circular *stūpa* of stone in the centre of a square, surrounded by an array of chapels, the corner ones larger and projecting outwards. Immediately by its side is a quadrangular monastery with circular projections at the exterior corners.

A second mound, to the south of the fortified mound, produced a *stūpa*-court and a flanking monastic quadrangle having dwelling-cells on its two sides. The central structure of the *stūpa*-court has almost disappeared, but the sculptures, including standing figures in the round and seated figures of Buddha, which once adorned its front faces flanking the staircase, are mostly preserved. A small votive *stūpa* by its side is particularly remarkable for the wealth of stucco figures on the façade of the square base; in the lower panel is a row of seated figures of Buddha and in the upper a frieze of elephants and atlantes, also of stucco.

In another mound, to the north-north-west of the fortified mound, was exhumed a quadrangle of many *stūpas*, flanked on the east by a quadrangular monastery with two halls, presumably the kitchen-refectory block, flanking the southern wing of cells, the walls of the monastery being mostly *kacheha*. The central structure of the quadrangle has vanished leaving only a fragment of the wall and two sculptures adorning the façade. With a single exception, which is circular on plan and has a seated figure of Buddha against it, all the platforms, evidently of *stūpas*, are square. These platforms received lavish treatment with stucco-work, mouldings, friezes of Buddha between Indo-Corinthian pilasters, scenes from the life of Buddha, modillion-cornice, etc.

In 1912, six more mounds were tackled. Though the finds of sculptures were numerous, the structural remains, consisting of scanty remnants of *stūpas*, monasteries and chapels, were unimpressive, most of their superstructure being of perishable materials. The *stūpas* followed the usual square plan, but one, an exception, was of a cruciform plan.

#### D. JAMALGARHI

The extensive ruins of Jamalgarhi (lat. 34°19' N.; long. 72°4' E.) are sited on a hill, 8 miles to the north of Mardan.

The main group, in its general planning, bears a faint similarity to that of Takht-i-Bahi, the latter hardly 8 miles to the west-south-west. Thus, the focus of the establishment is a *stūpa*, which, however, occupies the centre of a roughly circular court, instead of a quadrangle. The departure is dictated by the circular base of the *stūpa*, 22 ft. in diameter, its superstructure missing. The façade of the base is divided by pilasters into twenty panels, each containing a seated figure of Buddha in stucco. The circular pavement round the *stūpa* is made of dark-bluish slate slabs, many of which originally were inset with coins, a practice surviving in a limited extent even now. One such coin, found fixed in the circular depression, was an issue of the Kushān king Vāsudeva (circa A.D. 145-76).

Around the courtyard is a ring of small chapels, all raised on a continuous basement; the face of the latter is embellished with figures of Buddha, alternately ascetic and teaching, with smaller figures of standing Buddha placed between them. In none of the

chapels, which are now bereft of their roof, is preserved an image, though a large number of images and Indo-Corinthian pilaster-capitals of neat workmanship were found in front of them on the pavement. The latter also contained the fragments of small votive *stūpas* and a shaft.

As at Takht-i-Bahi, the *stūpa*-court is connected with a lower oblong court, but situated to its south, by a flight of steps, the latter sixteen in number. This staircase is of exceptional interest on account of the exuberance of bas-reliefs adorning the risers of the steps. These reliefs, some containing as many as forty figures, depict *Jātakas*, including *Vessantara* (p. 94) and *Sāma* (p. 176), procession, dance, chase and domestic scenes.

The lower court, specifically reserved for the votive offerings, is surrounded on all sides by small oblong chapels and has in the middle a number of small votive *stūpas* and chapels. This court, too, yielded an exceptionally rich crop of sculptures, including figures of Buddha and bejewelled Bodhisattvas, and pillar-capitals.

A flight of steps made in the southern wall of the lower court, instead of leading to a monastery as at Takht-i-Bahi, descends down to a small court with chapels, bases of *stūpas* and sculptures.

Immediately to its south and connected with it by a few steps is a spacious closed quadrangle with three cells at the west end and two niches in the opposite wall. Beneath its floor on the south side is a row of chambers with corbelled ceilings.

Noteworthy, among other buildings, is a small *stūpa*-court, located to the north of the Main *Stūpa*. It consists of a *stūpa* with a square base surrounded by a quadrangle of small oblong chapels.

One curious feature of this establishment is the absence of the quadrangular monastery. The monks' quarters are small isolated units, sometimes double-storeyed, usually with a verandah and a few cells and having their own courtyard and sometimes a small *stūpa*.

The water required for the establishment was stored in an artificial reservoir near the main *stūpa*.

The antiquities unearthed from different parts of the site are indeed overwhelming in number and have enriched many of the museums, including the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and Peshawar Museum. These include Kharoshthi inscriptions recording various dedications, Kushān coins, terracotta heads and copper and iron objects, besides hundreds of sculptures of stone and stucco, representing *Jātakas*, scenes from the life of Buddha and images of Buddha and elementary Bodhisattvas.

## E. TAXILA

One of the chief cities of ancient India, Taxila\* (lat. 33° 45' N.; long. 72° 49' E.)

\* In Sanskrit the name of the place is Takshashilā. The Greeks, who came to India in 326 B.C. with Alexander, called it Taxila, which name has now gained popularity and includes the remains not merely of the city that existed in Alexander's time but also, loosely, of the successor-cities and all other ancient establishments within a radius of 5 miles of that city.



was the capital of eastern Gandhāra. The ruins of Taxila, 20 miles north-west of Rawalpindi, consist of three city-sites—Bhir Mound, Sirkap and Sirsukh—and numerous isolated Buddhist monuments spread all over the valley, some being near the cities. Of varying sizes and importance, these Buddhist remains are self-contained units of the requisite buildings, chiefly *stūpas* and monasteries. The more important among these are the Dharmarājikā complex and those at Sirkap, Kalawan, Mohra-Moradu, Pippala, Jaulian and Bhamala—all, except the Dharmarājikā which had its nucleus going back to the days of Aśoka, dating from the first to the fifth centuries A.D. The establishments flourished largely on the economic prosperity of the cities.

The earliest city, represented by Bhir Mound, saw the invasion of Alexander and ceased to exist in about the second century B.C.; no Buddhist monuments have been identified among the excavated remains. The late Kushān and post-Kushān city of Sirsukh has not yet been excavated, and the existence or otherwise of Buddhist remains therein is unknown. The second city, Sirkap, succeeded Bhir as the capital under the Indo-Greeks in the second century B.C. and continued to be in occupation for the next four hundred years or so under the Śakas, Parthians and early Kushāns.

Within the precincts of the fortified city of Sirkap the bases of a few *stūpas* were exposed in the excavations; some of them were found attached to residential houses and evidently intended for individual lay worshippers—a tendency opposed to corporate worship as practised in most regions of India. Though there is nothing definite to indicate the Buddhist association of the *stūpas* (indeed, their Jaina origin has been suggested by some), the predominance of Buddhism in this region during the period to which they belonged (*viz.* the Scytho-Parthian period) would favour their Buddhist affiliation.

One of these *stūpas*, in Block F, stands within a square court, and its plinth, finished with a lime-coat, is itself an oblong structure with a projection towards the west for steps. The front wall of the plinth is particularly remarkable for the combination of Classical and Indian motifs. Its façade is divided into compartments by Indo-Corinthian pilasters. These compartments are further relieved with niches simulating the pedimental fronts of Greek structures, façade of the barrel-vaulted early Indian halls and the Indian *toranas*. Some of these niches are decorated at the top with stucco eagles, one double-headed—a west Asian motif.

A similar but less pretentious *stūpa*-plinth, its face panelled by pilasters, in Block G, yielded a schist casket containing a gold box with pieces of bone, a ring of gold wire, beads, pieces of gold leaf and copper coins of Azes.

Of the several other *stūpas*, one, in Block A, near the north gate of the city had, in the centre of its plinth, a relic-chamber, which, though previously despoiled, was found to contain fragments of a crystal relic-casket, a piece of bone, beads of different materials, pearls, gold pieces and coins of the Indo-Greek Apollodotus and the Scytho-Parthian Azes. The *stūpa*-compound presents other smaller *stūpas* and even a few living cells. A schist casket with a small piece of bone was found within the square plinth of a *stūpa* in a private shrine attached to the royal palace.

An imposing apsidal temple of Sirkap (pp. 46 and 47), in Block D, deserves mention. Standing on an elevated plinth in the middle of an oblong court, 228 ft. by 135 ft.,



the temple consists of an oblong nave, internally 41 ft. by 28 ft. 9 in., with a porch in the front and a circular rubble-filled apse behind—probably the seat of a *stūpa*—28 ft. 9 in. in diameter. A *pradakṣiṇa-paṭha*, gained through the front porch, goes round the nave and apse. In the court, on either side of the entrance, are a square *stūpa*-base and a few cells. The existence of this public shrine in the heart of the city, away from the monastic establishment, is interesting.

The southern part of the fortification-wall of Sirkap included within the city a part of the Hathial Range. In this hilly part stands a large *stūpa*, identified, on doubtful grounds, with the one erected by Aśoka to commemorate the tragedy of his son Kunāla. Tradition records that the beautiful eyes of Kunāla aroused the guilty passion of his step-mother, Tishyarakṣitā. Being enraged by Kunāla's rejection of her overtures, she swore to take revenge on him. When the prince was away in Taxila to quell the outbreak of a rebellion there, the queen contrived to send an order bearing the impression of Aśoka's seal to put out the eyes of the virtuous Kunāla. The exposed *stūpa*, however, dated only from the third or fourth century A.D. when Sirkap had been deserted as the capital city, though an earlier and much smaller *stūpa* had existed on the spot and was buried in the core of the large one when it was erected. The oblong base of the larger *stūpa*, with a flight of steps, is in three terraces, but the shape of the superstructure is unknown. The lowest terrace is relieved with pilasters. Attached to the *stūpa* and contemporaneous with it, is a quadrangular monastery of the normal plan, with an assembly-hall.

Further up the Hathial Range is a small monastery, locally known as Ghai, a remarkable feature of which is the conversion of the open central courtyard into a closed assembly-hall.

The Dharmarājikā (photo 88), locally known as Chir Tope due to a cleft (*chir*) made in the *stūpa* by clandestine diggers, was by far the most important Buddhist edifice of Taxila. Situated on a high plateau, about a mile to the south-east of Sirkap, its lofty structure at one time dominated the valley. Owing to the importance of its being one of the eighty-four thousand *stūpas* believed to have been erected by Aśoka, it underwent several restorations down to the last days of Buddhism at Taxila.

Nothing is definitely known about the nature of the earliest nucleus of the *stūpa*, attributed to Aśoka. In its present form, as excavated, the *stūpa*, 115 ft. (excluding the terrace and steps) in diameter and 45 ft. high, is circular on plan with a raised terrace around the base and having at the cardinal points four flights of steps leading to the terrace, the latter evidently serving as an upper processional path. The rubble core of the *stūpa* is held by sixteen irregularly-disposed walls which radiate from the centre but do not go down to the foundation and stop above the terrace-level. This indicates that the *stūpa*, of which these walls form part, rests on an earlier base.

The construction of the present *stūpa* took place in about the first century A.D. The next stage, about a century later, saw the reconstruction of the steps and the terrace, the latter's face divided into panels by pilasters with continuous torus and scotia mouldings below and a dentil cornice, representing the ends of beams, above. The last addition was in the fourth or fifth century A.D. when the base of the *stūpa* above the terrace was embellished with a band of stonework, relieved with niches, between



Indo-Corinthian pilasters, originally having figures of Buddha or Bodhisattvas. The base of the *stūpa* above the terrace was further provided with four projections facing the steps, in which were three niches for Buddha and his attendants. No relics were found inside.<sup>7</sup>

Around the *stūpa*, on the ground-level was a *pradakshina-patha* with three successive floors, the second of which, probably of the first century A.D., was paved with glass tiles.

Encircling the processional path is a ring of votive *stūpas*, originally circular, but later on with square or circular bases added to them. Relics, sometimes accompanied by precious or semiprecious stones and gold, were recovered from caskets placed inside some of the them. Later in date than the votive *stūpas* are small shrines built all round the *stūpa* to house stucco and terracotta images.

Further beyond, the open area is studded with small *stūpas* and shrines, including an apsidal one with a *stūpa* in the apse. In one of the shrines was found, inside a silver vase placed within a schist vessel, besides a gold casket with bones, a silver scroll. The inscription on the scroll, dated in the year 136 of Azes, records the enshrinement, in a Bodhisattva-shrine, in the compound of the Dharmarājikā, of the relics of Buddha, by one Urasaka, a Bactrian, in the reign of a nameless Kushān king. Apart from the irregular apartments for monks, there is a quadrangular monastery attached to the *stūpa*.

The Buddhist edifices at Kalawan, 1½ miles to the south-south-east of the Dharmarājikā, are remarkable in extent. Here there is no dominating central *stūpa*, and *stūpas* of modest dimensions occupy the *stūpa-court*. The terraced base of the largest of them, roughly occupying the central position, had an exceptionally large circular relic-chamber, 13 ft. 3 in. in diameter, the extant remains of which would indicate that it was a vaulted chamber. Several layers of wash on the walls bespeak its repeated use, but there was no clue as to how it was entered. Besides the *stūpas*, the court contains a number of *stūpa*-shrines (*griha-stūpa*), consisting of a sanctuary, internally either octagonal or square, preceded by a porch. The *stūpa* inside one of them yielded a relic-casket and a copper-plate inscription recording the deposit of relics at Chadaśilā by a female worshipper in the year 134 of Azes. Inside the octagonal sanctum of this *stūpa*-shrine were found many Gandhāra sculptures. Immediately to the south of the *stūpa-court* are three large monasteries, one with cells on four sides, the second with cells on two sides and some chambers on the third side and the third with cells on three sides. The cells are arranged as usual around a spacious court.

Three groups of monuments, Mohra-Moradu, Pippala and Jaulian, are obscurely situated on the range that flanks the Taxila valley on the east. In extent they are unimpressive, but they are of singular interest in that the façades of their *stūpas* were lavishly decorated with figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas in painted stucco, some of them constituting the finest products of the Gandhāra art. The Main *Stūpa* of Jaulian, with an oblong plinth, as usual, embellished with stucco-decorations, is surrounded by a number of votive *stūpas*, also embellished with stucco sculptures (photo 89); in one of these *stūpas* was found a quaint *stūpa*-shaped relic-casket (photo 44), made of lime-plaster,

<sup>7</sup> The *stūpa* had been cleft open from the top long before systematic excavation was undertaken. It is very likely that whatever relics had been deposited within were removed by treasure-hunters.



painted in blue and crimson colour and decorated with semiprecious stones. This tower-like *stūpa* gives an adequate idea about the later development of *stūpas*. Inside it was a wooden casket, which in turn, contained a copper one, this again enclosing a copper cylinder with particles of dust. In a casket from another votive *stūpa* were bones and two copper coins of the Kushān ruler Vāsudeva. The treatment of the plinths of the minor *stūpas* is particularly lavish.

Each of these sites has an attached monastery, the one at Mohra-Moradu being remarkable for stucco and terracotta figures of Buddha in the courtyard and the one at Jaulian for its elaborate plan (fig. 10, p. 39), which includes, besides living-cells and a fronting verandah around the central courtyard, adjuncts such as an assembly-hall, kitchen, refectory, store-room and scullery (fig. 10, p. 39). Further, the Jaulian monastery had stucco and terracotta figures in front of some of the cells. The central figures being those of Buddha in all cases, the presence of foreigners as worshippers in some of the groups is interesting. In one of the cells of the monastery, within an earthen vessel was a half-burnt Buddhist text written on birch-bark in Gupta characters. In each of the Mohra-Moradu and Pippala monasteries one of the living-cells, as in one of the monasteries of Kalawan, is occupied by a later *stūpa*, probably a memorial in honour of an important monk who lived there.

Other Buddhist monasteries within and around Taxila like those at Jandial, Lalchak, Khader Mohra, Akhauri and Badalpur are not noticed here, as they contain hardly any new features.

Farther away, Bhamala, 10 miles to the east of Sirsukh, presents its Main *Stūpa* decorated much in the same way as the preceding group. The plan of this *stūpa* (fourth-fifth century A.D.), instead of the usual square or oblong with a front projection to accommodate the single staircase, is cruciform with a central flight of steps in each of the four faces of the podium. The podium rests on a plinth, which also follows the salients and re-entrant angles of the podium. Around it also there are several small *stūpas* and chapels. The pavement of the *stūpa*-court is laid in terracotta tiles, sometimes decorated with a variety of motifs. The second storey of the quadrangular monastery here has its access through a staircase in the kitchen and not in one of the living-cells—a departure from the normal.

The secluded glen of Giri, 2 miles to the south-east of the Dharmarājikā, was fortified probably to provide shelter to the monks in times of trouble. The establishment, which seems to have originated in the fifth century A.D. when Hūṇa inroads were threatening the very existence of Buddhism in Gandhāra, contained two groups of monastic buildings and *stūpas*.

At the extreme northern end of the valley, on the Sarda Range, 5 miles to the north of Taxila, stands the fairly well-preserved *stūpa* of Bhallar, which furnishes evidence as to what some other Gandhāra *stūpas* might have been like. Standing on a high oblong base, approachable by a flight of steps, the tall drum of the *stūpa* rises in six or seven tiers decreasing upwards in diameter and is embellished with Indo-Corinthian pilasters, friezes and dentils. The dome, of the nature of which there is no evidence, must have been proportionately lofty.



## F. MANIKYALA

One of the important and extensive groups of monuments, consisting of not less than fifteen isolated *stūpas* with attached monasteries, is located mostly on sandstone ridges around Manikyala (lat. 33° 28' N.; long. 73° 15' E.), 20 miles south-east of Rawalpindi. Many of these *stūpas* yielded urns, precious and semiprecious stones and coins, while one of the partially-excavated monasteries yielded a head of Buddha, about one-fourth of life size, a grotesque face and a standing image of preaching Buddha, 1 ft. 4½ in. high, all of bronze. In one of the *stūpas* also were found some fragments of bronze images. Unfortunately, the site suffered greatly in about the third decade of the nineteenth century at the hands of General Ventura and A. Court, whose objective was to retrieve the relic-deposits. These amateurs did not pay any attention to the safety or interest of the monuments. Neither did they care to preserve any record as regards forms and dimensions.

Some details of the Great *Stūpa* are available from the account of Cunningham who visited the place in 1863. This *stūpa* is a hemisphere, 127 ft. 9 in. in diameter, below which is a 15-ft. high cylindrical drum with a slightly increased diameter, the latter resting in the middle of a circular terraced plinth, 13 ft. 5 in. high. The total height of the *stūpa*, excluding the missing *harmikā*, is 92 ft. 4 in. The terrace above the plinth, 18 ft. 9 in. wide, is approached by four flights of steps facing the cardinal directions. A belt of pilasters, arrayed between two sets of horizontal mouldings, relieves the faces of both the drum and the plinth. Crowning the upper belt, at a small height, is a second set of mouldings. The spaces between the pilasters and also the shafts and the bases of the pilasters of the upper row are of sandstone. The rest of the venter is of smoothed *kankar*, though in the interior sandstone blocks are used. In the centre, just below the bottom of the hemisphere, was noticed a small chamber. Inside it were forty-four copper coins and a copper box enclosing a cylindrical brass casket, the latter bearing the dedicatory inscription of a Satrap of Kapiśā (Kafiristan). The brass casket contained in its turn five copper coins of Kanishka and Huvishka and a small gold cylindrical box, the latter with a gold coin of Huvishka, a tiny gold piece and an inscribed silver disc. There were other deposits at different heights, the one near the top at the base of a masonry square having eighth-century coins. It is presumed, therefore, that the *stūpa*, originally of sandstone, was erected in the reign of Huvishka and was renovated in about the eighth century A.D., the later renovation following closely the early form.

The ruined *stūpa*, 2 miles to the north-north-east of the Great *Stūpa*, is of considerable interest due to the deposit inside the rectangular relic-chamber, noticed at a height of 10 ft. from the ground-level. The chamber was covered by an inscribed slab, the purpose of the inscription being the enshrinement of the relics of Buddha by a general of the Kushān race in the eighteenth regnal year of Kanishka. Inside the chamber was a copper cylindrical casket and copper coins of Kanishka and his predecessors, Kujula Kadphises and Wema Kadphises. This casket enclosed a silver cylinder, the latter again containing Roman silver coins (*denarii*) and a gold cylinder, the last with gold coins of Kanishka, precious stones and pearls.

The mound, about a mile to the north-east of the Great *Stūpa*, yielded the square

basement of a stone *stūpa*. A shaft sunk in the middle produced a red earthen pot with a copper coin of Satrap Zeionises (first century A.D.). Immediately below this was found a stone slab covering another slab. In a cavity of the latter were a copper coin of Kuzulakara Kadphises and a miniature *stūpa* of slate,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  in. high and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. in diameter, enclosing a crystal reliquary. The latter contained a piece of bone covered by a gold leaf, a silver coin, a copper ring and four small beads of pearl, turquoise, garnet and quartz. The miniature *stūpa*, capped by a succession of four gradually-diminishing *chhatras* originally wrapped in gold leaf, resembles the Great Stūpa in broad features, but its cylindrical drum and circular plinth are much elongated. On the basis of the coin inside the earthen pot and also the Kharoshthī letter *ja* (taken to be the initial of Zeionises) on the miniature *stūpa*, the *stūpa* has been attributed to Zeionises.

From the mound known as Mahal, 1000 yards to the south-east of the Great Stūpa, were unearthed two colossal heads, the smaller of which is 22 in. high and 20 in. broad.



## 5. SINDH (WEST PAKISTAN)

There is no definite evidence as to the time when Buddhism first obtained a footing in Sindh. According to Hiuen Tsang, Aśoka built 'some tens of topes as memorials' of the alleged visits of Buddha to this part. The pilgrim further adds that Upagupta (who converted Aśoka) used to visit the country often, and monasteries or *stūpas* were erected where he had stopped and preached. The faith, no doubt, took a firm root in the days of the Kushāns, to which period went back the nucleus of the *stūpa* of Mohenjo-daro (p. 131), and continued to flourish in the Gupta period. The religion was at its peak in the time of Hiuen Tsang. The contemporary king of the land himself was a Buddhist. The pilgrim speaks of several hundreds of monasteries teeming with more than a thousand monks, all belonging to the Sāṃmitīya sect of Hīnayāna. But the majority of the monks were reported lazy and worthless. The few sincere ones led a secluded life, trying hard to attain Arhatship. Near Multan, which was at that time a separate principality and a dependency of Che-ka in the Punjab, there were more than ten monasteries but mostly in ruins, a few of them only having monks.

I-tsing also found the Sāṃmitīya sect dominating in the region. At the time of Hucich'ao (about A.D. 729) both the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna forms of Buddhism drew adherents.

The *Chach-nāma*, which affords glimpses of Sindh on the eve of the Arab conquest, bears out the influential position of the Samanis (*śramaṇas*) on the local ruler when Chach invaded Brahmanabad. Even the invader was influenced by the Buddhist *guru* of the late king, who asked Chach to repair the damaged temple of Buddha and the new *vihāra* at Sawandisi. The brother (Chandar), who succeeded Chach, was a Buddhist and made many of his subjects believers in Buddha, but at the point of the sword. Chandar's successor was Dāhir, son of Chach, who fell in battle with the Arabs under Muḥammad-ibn-Qāsim in A.D. 712.

The Arab conquest of Sindh did not materially affect the Buddhists who made their terms with the Muslims showing their sympathy in their cause. The conquerors, too, in return treated the Buddhists favourably in contrast to the Hindus. Having a favoured position Buddhism seemed to have influenced the religion of the conqueror to a certain extent, with the result that a few extraneous features, like the doctrine of *Fanā*, were assimilated by Ṣūfism.

The survival of the faith even long after the Arab occupation of Sindh is attested by archaeological evidence. Two of the images, dated in the reign of the Pāla king Śūrapāla, bear dedicatory inscriptions recording their installation by a Buddhist monk of Uddandapura (same as Odantapurī) monastery (p. 16), who originally hailed from Sindhudeśa. The establishment of Mūrpur-khas (p. 133) was a living centre at least up to the tenth century A.D.

Sindh was one of the strongholds of Hīnayāna Buddhism. Tāranātha speaks of the Saindhava Śrāvakas joining the Ceylonese monks in destroying the Vajrayāna images of Bodh-Gaya.



Buddhist *stūpas* are definitely located at Thul Rukan near Moro, Depar Ghangro near Brahmanabad, Saïdpur<sup>1</sup> near Tando-Muhammad-Khan, Jherrick, Mohenjo-daro and Mirpur-khas, while there are many more mounds, the affiliations of which remain to be determined by detailed survey and excavations.

#### A. MOHENJO-DARO

Directly over the mound containing the relics of the proto-historic Harappa culture at Mohenjo-daro (lat. 27° 19' N.; long. 68° 8' E.; District Larkana) was founded in the Kushān period an establishment by a colony of Buddhists who held it till the sixth century A.D. or even more. The remains consist of an open quadrangle with the Main *Stūpa* roughly near its centre and the apartments of a quadrangular monastery around the periphery, all rebuilt or repaired more than once. The quadrangle presents not less than five floors, built at different heights, the earliest floor, like the platform of the *stūpa*, being of bricks taken from the older structures of the Harappa culture.

The *stūpa*, which was built first, had a lofty oblong platform, 20 ft. high, about 50 ft. wide (north-south) and 74 ft. long (east-west) including the steps provided in the central projection of the front (east) face. The approach to the top of the platform, which served as a processional path, was made unusually elaborate: it consisted of a few steps and landings leading to an oblong narrow vestibule made into the thickness of the platform; beyond the vestibule was a short passage with a niche having a seated image of Buddha, made of bricks in mud (presumably painted or gilt originally), in its back (west) wall and at either side a flight of steps ascending to the top of the platform. The platform underwent three further additions in the form of retaining walls or envelopes in subsequent periods. The drum of the *stūpa*, 33 ft. 6 in. in diameter, now stands to a height of only 8 ft. 4 in., the superstructure above having entirely disappeared. It was constructed of sun-dried bricks with mud in the form of a ring with a smooth finish of the inner face. The central hollow is presumed to have been filled in with earth or debris. At a depth of 14 ft. below the hollow was found by the treasure-hunting villagers an alabaster relic-casket. By the west side of the platform were found fragments of plaster bearing traces of figures and decorative patterns, some painted in blue, yellow, red and chocolate, and fragmentary inscriptions in Kharoshthī and Brāhmī scripts, one of them reading *samana* (*śramaṇa*) in characters of the Kushān period.

In the open space around the *stūpa* are numerous small platforms, evidently remains of small votive *stūpas*. The quadrangle has a bath-room at its south-eastern corner.

The monastery with more than two floorings, has in the eastern flank a central entrance-vestibule facing the steps of the *stūpa*, besides a shrine with clay and stucco images, two long pillared chambers and a staircase leading to the upper storey. One peculiar feature of the dwelling cells of the other three flanks is that they are double quarters, one opening into the quadrangle and the other either by its side or at its back and communicating with it by a door. Two of the rear cells of the north flank were further

<sup>1</sup> The *stūpa* was excavated in 1915; cf. *An. Rep. Arch. Surv. Ind.*, 1914-15 (Calcutta, 1920), pp. 89-96.



connected with a third long narrow room made in the thickness of the side walls of the double quarters. A curious torpedo-shaped narrow long cell in the south flank, communicated with a large chamber, is of unusual interest, as inside it amidst debris were found a large number of vessels with pointed bottoms—burial-urns—some arranged over others, the lowest being placed on ring-shaped stands, two large jars with uncalcined bones and small burial-urns with pieces of bone in terracotta reliquaries and a sandstone relic-casket, besides three coins of the Kushān king Vāsudeva (*circa* A.D. 145-76) in the upper layer of debris. The south-western corner cell was found to contain a large earthen jar with urns containing pieces of bone.

Edging the southern half of the western (exterior) wall of the monastery is a complex of structures comprising probably a kitchen, pantries, store-rooms and a refectory, a concomitant adjunct of the growth of the monastic institution.

### B. MIRPUR-KHAS

The mound, known as Kahu-jo-daro, half a mile to the north of the town of Mīrpur-khas (lat. 25° 32' N.; long. 69° 1' E.; District Thar and Parker), 42 miles east of Hyderabad, represented the ruins of a Buddhist establishment. It had been extensively denuded of its brick contents by the railway-contractors before a partial excavation was undertaken in 1910. The excavation brought to light the remains of an impressive *stūpa* (Main *Stūpa*), its superstructure, however, mostly missing.

The original plinth of the *stūpa*, about 18 ft. high, was 53 ft. 6 in. square excluding the *pañcha-ratha* projection in the middle of the front (west) side. In the depth of the central projection of this *pañcha-ratha* was provided a passage leading to a vestibule with a cell on each of its three remaining sides, the entire complex—a singular feature of the *stūpa* here—being made into the mass of the central portion of the west face of the plinth. The exact use of these cells is unknown, but it is presumed that they contained images. Only one terracotta slab, 2 ft. 6 in. high, with a relief of a standing male figure with spiral curls and a small lotus in right hand, was found in the east cell which has a platform edging the back wall. The ceiling of this cell was spanned by corbels and was made waggon-vaulted by dressing the underside. The ceiling of the south cell, however, was, as in some of the cells at Ratnagiri (Orissa), constructed in the radiating principle of an arch, the bricks being placed on edge. The horizontal lintel of the door-frame was of timber.

The burnt-brick faces of the remaining three sides of the plinth had a set of bold mouldings at the base, which also ran on the front face. The lowest recess in these mouldings was decorated with panels, depicting a variety of motifs, arrayed between a set of four petals. The space above the mouldings on three faces was divided into five compartments by pilasters: the three central compartments of each face had each the representation of the façade of a barrel-vaulted shrine with a terracotta image of Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā* (photo 90) in the central niche, while the two outer ones had lattice-work within a frame in imitation of windows. Of colourful effect were the images of Buddha painted in golden colour with robes in red and hair,

eyebrows and pupils of eyes in black. The moulded base of the drum had a basal diameter of 37 ft.

The relic-chamber, 1 ft. 3 in. square, in the centre of the *stūpa* and at a depth of 25 ft. from the extant top yielded a flat stone coffer containing a crystal casket which enclosed a silver cylindrical one, wrapped in gold leaf, this again having a gold one inside besides beads of coral, crystal and gold, pearls, a copper finger-ring, a ring of gold wire, copper coins, grains of wheat, a sheet of white paper, lumps of charcoal, a small quantity of funeral ash and bits of calcined bone.

In a later period when the walls of the plinth, which was of the thickness of only a few bricks, showed signs of subsidence and bulging out, the plinth was buttressed up by solid brickwork of 12 ft. to 15 ft. thickness which entirely engulfed the original facing.

In front of the three cells, but at a height of about 6 ft. from the floor-level, were found amidst debris copper issues of the Arab rulers, who occupied Sindh in the beginning of the eighth century A.D., and above hundred clay votive tablets of various sizes. Some of the tablets have on them the figure of Buddha flanked by *stūpas* with the Buddhist creed below, while others have exclusively rows of *stūpas* with the creed in characters of about the ninth-tenth centuries A.D. There is no doubt, therefore, that the centre continued to be a living one long after the Arab conquest of Sindh. The shape of the *stūpas* on these plaques is of a uniform pattern and may be taken as a rough replica of the Main *Stūpa* which has been dated about A.D. 400. Amidst the debris were found a large number of terracotta plaques, with diverse patterns of fairly good workmanship. The inspiration from Gandhāra in some of the motifs depicted on the plaques is palpable.

By the side of the *stūpa* were monasteries. The quadrangular character of one of them, though completely stripped of its brickwork, is evident from the robber's trenches.

The subsequent excavation, in 1917, of a mound, not far from the Main *Stūpa*, brought to light a forest of small brick *stūpas*, besides remains of two monasteries of about the sixth century A.D., votive objects, like tiny clay *stūpas*, three of them with the Buddhist creed incised on them, and tablets of various descriptions and the torso of a colossal standing image (of Buddha or Bodhisattva) of stucco covered by gold leaf. All the smaller *stūpas* of the upper level, which had been opened, had funerary associations, as they contained urns with pieces of bone. Below the floor of these *stūpas* were found some earlier minor *stūpas*, which included two of clay, one with bones and the other with tablets.



## 6. RAJASTHAN

Though Buddhism stepped into Rajasthan in the days of Aśoka, if not earlier, the Buddhist remains in this tract are few and far between. The total absence of monuments in a large part of the country can hardly be attributed to inadequate exploration and destructive hand of man. It appears that the greater part of the land did not prove congenial to the flowering of this faith in spite of Aśoka's zeal in its expansion. The extreme scarcity of Buddhist images is again a pointer to the same direction.

Two of the edicts of Aśoka were found at Bairat (District Jaipur), 52 miles from Jaipur. Both reveal the Emperor's ardent faith in Buddhism. One of them, on a rock still *in situ*, is a version of the Minor Rock-Edict, found at several other places also. The other, on a detached block of granite (now in the collection of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta), is unique in its import. It not only declares in unambiguous terms Aśoka's reverence for and faith in Buddha, *Dharma* and *Saṅgha* but prescribes seven Buddhist texts, selected by him, for the study of the Buddhist monks and nuns as well as the laity. Aśoka's interest in the Buddhist establishment at Bairat is further proved by the fragments of a (or two) pillar and of an umbrella on the two terraces of the Bijak-ki-pahāḍi overlooking the township. Made of the Chunar sandstone, many of these fragments bear the characteristic Mauryan polish. The circular *chaitya-griha* (p. 42; fig. 12, p. 43) on the lower terrace and possibly the nucleus of the brick monastery on the upper terrace cropped up in the Maurya times. The ruined monastery, as it stands, is a restoration of a later period. Its four wings are arrayed around a courtyard which has in the centre a mass of rock. The last, according to Cunningham, was utilized as the core of a *stūpa* veneered with bricks. The establishment, to judge by the finds, did not flourish after the first century A.D.

None of the monuments, which cropped up in the regime of the immediate successors of the Mauryas, are intact. Six uprights forming parts of a railing, presumably of a *stūpa*, are found re-used as pillars of a *chhatrī* at Lal Sote (District Jaipur), 57 miles from the town of Jaipur.<sup>1</sup> Made of mottled red sandstone, these uprights, about 6 ft. 6 in. (high)  $\times 8\frac{1}{2}$  in.  $\times 7\frac{1}{2}$  in., are oblong at the base and at the top and octagonal in the middle. While their two sides provide each three lenticular sockets (for the insertion of cross-bars), the façades are elegantly relieved with full medallions, half medallions and blue lotuses. Of the full medallions, one presents the relief of a *chaitya-griha*, another a wheel and the rest lotuses. The last vary in designs, three being distinguished by a human bust or head in the centre. Composite animals with fish-tails, half lotuses and floral or plant motifs form the theme of the half medallions. Stylistically, the reliefs are akin to those of Sanchi and Bharhut of the second-first centuries B.C. The original locale of these uprights is not known.

In about the sixth or seventh century A.D. cropped up Buddhist settlements on

<sup>1</sup> R. C. Agrawala, 'Unpublished Railing Pillars from Rajasthan', *Lalit Kalā*, no. 11 (April, 1962), pp. 60 and 61.



the hills of Kolvi, Binnayaga and Hathiagor, all in the extreme south of District Jhalawar, bordering District Mandasor of Madhya Pradesh. Indeed, the rock-cut caves in these places are offshoots of the same Buddhist movement which produced the caves at Dhamnar (Madhya Pradesh, p. 104), this place being only 22 miles north-west of Kolvi. Excavated out of rugged rocks of coarse texture, unsuitable for fine carving and finish, these groups do not claim the architectural and sculptural excellence of the splendid groups of Maharashtra. Yet, they have distinguished themselves by evolving a novel type of shrines in the outward form of *stūpas*. Though Buddha has been represented in many reliefs, the figures of Bodhisattvas are conspicuous by their absence. Presumably, the Buddhists of these centres were Hinayānists.

The picture of Buddhism in the seventh century A.D. that emerges from the pen of Hsien Tsang is far from bright. Thus, the country of P'o-li-ye-ta-lo (commonly identified with Bairat) had eight Buddhist monasteries, all badly ruined. The number of monks, who were all Hinayānists, was very few, while that of 'professed non-Buddhists' exceeded one thousand. The Ku-che-lo (Gurjara ?) country, the capital of which was Pi-lo-mo-lo (generally identified with Bhinmala, 120 miles from Jodhpur), had only one monastery with about a hundred Hinayānist monks. The country had 'a flourishing population in good circumstances, mostly non-Buddhists, only a few believing in Buddhism'. The king, however, was a believer in Buddha.

The condition did not improve afterwards, though the faith did linger at places for a few centuries more. The inscribed slab<sup>2</sup> by the side of the Barkhari gate of the town of Shergarh (District Kota) records the construction of a Buddhist temple and a monastery to the east of the mount Kośavardhana by the feudal chief (*sāmanta*) Devadatta in Vikrama Samvat 847.

Another centre was in the vicinity of Chitorgarh.<sup>3</sup> On the top of the hill and by the side of Fath Jamal tank were found nearly ten portable votive *stūpas*, presumably brought from some other place near by. All of them are monolithic, the larger ones being 3 ft. 3 in. high (up to the top of the dome, the *harmikā* being missing) and 1 ft. 8 in. square at the base. One of them has now been housed in the National Museum, New Delhi. It (3 ft. 1 in. high excluding the *harmikā* which is broken and 1 ft. 7 in. square at the base) has a high square base, a drum with a *viśva-padma* near the base and a torus moulding above a band relieved with sixteen *kīrti-mukhas* at the top and a cylindrical dome. Four—Akshobhya, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi and Ratnasambhava—of the Dhyāni-Buddhas occupy the four faces of the base. Seated on a *viśva-padma*, they are in their characteristic poses, each below a *makara-torāṇa*. All of them are flanked by two standing Bodhisattvas bearing *chāmaras*. On one side of the base occurs the Buddhist creed inscribed in characters of about the ninth century A.D. The establishment to which these *stūpas* belonged obviously followed Vajrayāna. Its original locale has not been identified. The find of Nandi, Śiva's bull, in the midst of these *stūpas*, led some scholars to presume that these *stūpas* were converted into *liṅgas* by removing the *harmikās*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Indian Antiquary*, XIV (1885), pp. 45-49; Bhandarkar's List, no. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Progress Report of Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle, 1904*, p. 45.



It is not unlikely that Buddhism could not make much headway due to the formidable opposition of other rival faiths which were dominating in this region. A faint glimpse of this strained relation between the Śaiva Pāsupata sect and Buddhism may be had from a stone inscription<sup>4</sup> in the temple of Nātha near the well-known Eklingji temple (14 miles north of Udaipur). Śrī-Vedāṅgamuni of the Pāsupata sect, in this record, dated Vikrama Samvat 1028 (A.D. 971), is eulogized as having curbed the followers of Sugata.

### A. KOLVI

The caves, near the village of Kolvi<sup>5</sup> (lat. 24°1' N.; long. 75°50' E.; District Jhalawar) by the side of the streamlet Chasri, are excavated, like those of Dhamnar (p. 104), out of the precipitous faces of a laterite hill with a flat top. Generally located near the top, many of them have suffered much on account of natural denudation. They also do not present a very attractive appearance in their coarse rugged rock; but originally, no doubt, their look was far from gloomy, brightly garbed as their façades and walls were in plaster. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the site, with its peculiar specimens, calls for a special notice. The exposed caves, excluding the free-standing *stūpas*, number about forty-five, but there is reason to believe that there are still some more caves buried inside the talus.

The free-standing *stūpas* and also the reliefs have a family affinity with those of Dhamnar (p. 104), which is about 22 miles to the north-west. The *stūpas* consist of a base, usually square and rarely octagonal, with a set of mouldings at the top and near the bottom, a cylindrical drum of smaller girth, also moulded at the top and at the base and often with projected niches containing *stūpas* or images of Buddha, an elongated hemispherical dome, a square *harmikā* with a projected band above and a *chhatravali*. In some cases portions of the dome with the crowning members above are of separate stones. These *stūpas* with their evolved shape and tower-like appearance suggest a date not earlier than the sixth century A.D. and may even be later. The absence of the figures of Bodhisattvas may be due to the influence of Hinayāna here and in the neighbouring Binnayaga (p. 139).

The monastic apartments present hardly any striking features. In spite of the late date of the site, when the quadrangular monastic plan was in wide use in most of the centres, the residents here resorted to small units. The majority of the residential caves consist of a plain cell, oblong or square, with a single door and generally with flat ceiling. The ceiling of these caves is in some instances arched. Of extreme rarity is the cave comprising a cell, open in the front.

The type, next in abundance, comprises a long front cell (rather a closed lobby) with a door and sometimes balustraded windows and rarely with a vaulted ceiling

<sup>4</sup> *Journ. Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XXII (1908), pp. 151 ff.

<sup>5</sup> The place is about 8 miles from Dag. The latter is connected by bus with Chaumabla (on the Delhi-Bombay line of the Western Railway), the distance being 15 miles.



and a small cell (two in exceptional cases) either at the back or one of the sides. A variant of this type introduces a chamber with two pillars in the front, besides the cell at the back of the closed lobby. The pillars are either oblong with bracket-capitals or with oblong bases, oblong shafts having octagonal neckings framed within three-fourths of medallions and petals and bracket-capitals, the latter type of shaft and capital having the closest analogue in the pillars of the seventh-century Temple 18 of Sanchi (p. 98). The balusters of the windows are, in some cases, of this pattern. Sometimes the caves have a verandah, either open or with pillars of the designs already noted, and a cell (rarely two).

There are two specimens of double-storeyed dwelling caves. In one, the lower storey consists of a closed L-shaped lobby with a door and a balustraded window and a cell, also with a door and a balustraded window and with an arched ceiling, and the upper storey is a verandah and a chamber of two pillars having oblong shafts, octagonal neckings and bracket-capitals. The lower storey of the other, noted for its symmetrical façade, comprises a lobby with an arched ceiling and a door flanked by two windows, and three cells at the back. There is a triangular recess over the door. The upper storey, accessible by a stair beyond the sinister end of the lower storey, consists of a closed passage with the door at the sinister end, which guards the head of the stair, and two cells, one entered through the other, at the back. The passage is lighted by two balustraded windows, perched right above those of the lower storey, the balusters of the larger one having oblong shafts and rolled-up bracket-capitals. The front wall of the upper storey slightly projects over the lower, so that the bottom of the projection forms the eaves of the lower storey.

Many of the residential caves are provided with raised rock-cut beds, their façades rarely moulded, and with pillows, sometimes two, one at the head and the other at the foot of the bed. Niches sometimes occur in the walls, the latter having in some cases regular holes for the reception of rods.

There are no less than five sanctuaries, often with a cave juxtaposed on the opposite side. All of them are plain small oblong chambers with a single door and have an image of Buddha, seated in *dhyāna-mudrā*, on a pedestal carved against the back wall. One of them has an arched ceiling springing from the ledges of the side walls and an arched entrance too.

What, however, lends importance to this series is the existence of three *stūpa*-shaped sanctuaries of a novel design. The object of worship is an image of Buddha who occupies the centre of an edifice, which has outwardly taken the form of a *stūpa*. This peculiar type appears to have evolved out of the earlier practice of carving the image of Buddha within a niche against the body of the *stūpa* itself, but its distribution is limited to this part of India alone. One of the minor structures of the late Gupta period at Nālandā is distantly reminiscent of this trend, but there again the image is inside an oblong chamber, with a vaulted roof, attached to the *stūpa*.

These *stūpa*-shaped sanctuaries emulate the prevalent *stūpa*-form of this centre. Thus, they have a square platform with mouldings both at the top and at the base, a moulded cylindrical drum and an elongated dome, the crowning elements being now



missing. The largest\* of the three is also the most elaborate one (photo 91). The platform, with façades embellished with *chaitya*-windows and niches crowned by *chaitya*-windows, has a central projection in each of the four sides. The projection on the front side is longer and more conspicuous and is fashioned into a pillared portico. The moulded drum, too, maintains the projections, the front one being here also more pronounced. The latter simulates an oblong structure with an arched roof and ends like that of a traditional *chaitya-griha*, its façade being adorned by a *chaitya*-window with a *stūpa*. The projections on other sides have a *chaitya*-window with a *stūpa* inside the medallion. The intervening spaces between the projections are embellished with two *chaitya*-windows, one above the other, flanked by pilasters having bracket-capitals. Similar *chaitya*-windows also occur on the sides of the projections as well. The missing dome above the drum was of masonry. The two front pillars of the portico with moulded bases, oblong shafts and rolled-up bracket-capitals, along with two pilasters having similar capitals at the back, support an arched ceiling. There are parapet-like low walls along the sides of portico, the latter's façade, above the pillars, having a row of three *chaitya*-windows between two sets of mouldings. At the rear end of the portico and approached through it by a door is the sanctum, cut into the depth of the platform and the plinth below. Its ceiling, too, is arched. On a pedestal carved against the back wall is an image of Buddha in *bhadrāsana*, originally finished in plaster.

The remaining two *stūpa*-shaped sanctuaries (nos. 5 and 9 of Cunningham) are simpler. Excavated into the depth of their moulded square platforms is the sanctum. The object of worship in both is now missing, though the pedestal of the image is still preserved in the one (no. 5 of Cunningham) nearer the largest one. The sanctum of this sanctuary, which preserves the dome intact, has an arched ceiling. Its circular drum is relieved with four projected niches, each containing a *stūpa*, crowned by a *chaitya*-window. The drum of the third *stūpa*-shaped sanctuary (no. 9 of Cunningham) has also four arched niches facing the cardinal points, each niche, however, with a figure of Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*. The upper portion of its dome is now missing.

At the back of the last is a court with an impressively large hall at its rear end. This hall, with benches around its walls, is approached by a single door and divided into three parallel bays by two rows of four pillars and two pilasters each. These pillars have square bases, slightly tapering oblong shafts and rolled-up bracket-capitals. Each row rests on a running basement and supports an architrave, the ceilings of all the bays being vaulted. The dexter wall of the middle bay has an arched niche, now empty, framed by a *chaitya*-window perched on pilasters with oblong shafts, octagonal necks between semicircles and rolled-up bracket-capitals. The entrance-door is also crowned by a *chaitya*-window placed on two side pilasters. The sinister side of the court has a colossal relief of standing Buddha, with right hand in *vara-mudrā* and the left, akimbo, touching the chest.

Some yards further from this hall is a large pillared chamber with a pillared portico in the front, the façade of the latter relieved with a row of three *chaitya*-windows between

\* No. 2 of Cunningham.



two sets of mouldings. The inside of this chamber is full of debris and fallen materials, so that its plan and also the cells, if there are any, beyond the chamber, cannot be made out. The capitals of the pillars are rolled-up brackets. The lintel of the large door of the chamber is in the form of a roundish moulding relieved with *chaitya*-windows, while the jambs have facets.

This series has also a singular *chaitya-griha*, apsidal on plan internally, with a vaulted ceiling and pierced with a single door, opposite the apse end. The exterior wall above the door is relieved with the façade of the traditional *chaitya-griha*, with a vaulted nave and half-arched aisles, containing a *stūpa*, the latter having an empty niche, evidently for the reception of a detachable image, in the centre. Inside the *chaitya-griha* is again a *stūpa*-shaped sanctuary, apsidal outside and oblong inside, with an arched ceiling. Thus, the *stūpa*, with a plain plinth, a moulded drum and a hemispherical dome crowned by a *harmikā* with *chhatravali* above, was converted into a sanctuary by making the inside hollow and adding two side walls which project beyond the front face of the *stūpa*. The side walls of the entrance to the sanctum are divided into compartments, the lower containing a standing figure, and the upper Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā* inside an arched niche. Against the back wall of the sanctuary is a moulded pedestal, on the top of which is a large image of Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*.

#### B. BINNAYAGA

Binnayaga (lat. 24° 4' N.; long. 75° 53' E.; District Jhalawar) is 5 miles east-north-east of Kolvi, and its caves, cut out also of the vertical faces of a flat-topped laterite hill, pertain to the same phase of the creative activity. There are nearly twenty caves so far exposed. Most of them are monastic abodes of small units, similar to those at Kolvi and are of little interest. As in the latter site, there are free-standing rock-cut *stūpas* of the same typical design.

Among the caves the *stūpa*-shaped sanctuary (photo 92) is the most interesting. Analogous to those at Kolvi, this edifice has a platform with mouldings at the top and at the base, a cylindrical drum, also with mouldings, and an elongated dome, the last's upper portion, which was presumably of masonry, now missing. Both the platform and the drum have a projection in the middle of each side, the front one of the former extended forward into a pillared portico with a flat ceiling and low screens, with reliefs of balustraded railings, along the sides. The roof of the portico rests on architraves, the latter borne by two pilasters and two front pillars with moulded bases, oblong shafts and bracket-capitals. This roof, which, along with the architraves, rears its head above the level of the platform, reaches the height of the drum and touches the front projection of the drum, which forms the roof of the sanctum behind the portico. The roof of the portico is, after the likeness of a traditional *chaitya-griha*, semicylindrical with a top ridge, at the central crown of which is a fluted member. Three *chaitya*-windows in two rows embellish the façade of this roof, the latter's sides having a single *chaitya*-window each, crowned by a pinnacle. The three remaining projections of the platform are relieved with *chaitya*-windows on basements. The corresponding *chaitya*-windows



on the drum-projections, which also simulate the semicylindrical roof with *chaitya*-windows at the sides and a ridge at the top, have a lotus inside the medallion. *Chaitya*-windows between pilasters with bracket-capitals occur also in the remaining portions of the drum between the projections.

At the back of the portico and communicated by a door is the oblong sanctum with a flat ceiling, excavated into the depth of the platform. Against its back wall is a high moulded pedestal for the image, which has now disappeared.

To the sinister side of the court of this sanctuary is a dilapidated monastery consisting of a lobby with a door and a cell on either side and at the back a long chamber with two pillars in the front, the chamber again giving access to a cell on the dexter. The capitals of the pillars, their shafts now missing, are rolled-up brackets.

A second monastery, a relatively larger one, comprises a lobby with a door and a cell at either end, a pillared hall at the back and two cells, one each on either side of the hall. The four unfinished pillars of the hall, arranged in a square, have oblong bases, oblong tapering shafts and bracket-capitals.

The only other cave deserving mention consists of two wings on two sides of an open courtyard. At the back is a closed lobby with a vaulted ceiling and a central door, leading to a chamber having two front pillars with moulded bases and bracket-capitals, this chamber again being flanked by a cell on either side. On the dexter of the court is a long hall with an arched ceiling and a door, leading to a small oblong shrine with a vaulted ceiling. The moulded pedestal against the back wall is now empty.

## 7. GUJARAT

The beginnings of Buddhism in Gujarat go back no further than the reign of Aśoka. Though one of the versions of the well-known set of his Fourteen Rock-Edicts is engraved on a rock by the side of Junagadh and not far from the foot of the Girnar hill, no Buddhist remains have yet been definitely associated with the Emperor.

But the early Buddhist affiliation of the area around Girnar is beyond doubt. One of the establishments was at Intwa (p. 12), on a hill, hardly 2 miles north of Girnar. A small-scale excavation at this site has resulted in partially unearthing a spacious quadrangular monastery with a central brick-paved courtyard, a flanking verandah and ranges of cells, made of large bricks in mud. Yet, there are other quadrangular brick structures, at least two on one flank and one on the other of this monastery. The establishment, to judge from the extent of ruins, was an impressive one. The partially-exposed monastery was called *Mahārāja-Rudrasena-vihāra*, as may be gathered from a sealing with the legend *Mahārāja-Rudrasena-vihāre bhikṣu-saṅghasya*, found in a cell of the southern side during the excavation. This king, who evidently built the monastery, has been identified with the Śaka Satrap Rudrasena I (A.D. 199-222).

The remains of another establishment are now hidden amidst a thick jungle at Boria, nearly 2 miles south of the foot of Girnar. The mounds were also partially exposed, the sole object of the excavator being, however, to reach the relics. The detailed report of this excavation is not available, but the relics, consisting of ashes, beads, pearls and stones, and reliquaries—four, enclosed one within other, of terracotta, of copper, of silver and of gold—found inside a *stūpa*, are now in the Junagadh Museum. The terracotta casket, the outermost, was disclosed inside a slot made into a stone slab. Besides, pieces of a stone railing and umbrella, forming probably part of the crowning members of a *stūpa* were also encountered. The remains of this establishment, locally called *Lakha-medhi*, are very extensive. The structures are generally constructed of large bricks in mud. The lofty solid structure of bricks, locally known as *Chhoṭa-lakha-medhi* with a height of more than 30 ft. and with a central trench cleaving it into two halves by the former explorer in search of relics, may probably, on opening, prove to be a colossal *stūpa*.

The Buddhist association of Amreli (lat. 21° 31' N.; long. 71° 31' E.) in the early Gupta period is suggested by a few fragmentary terracottas, unearthed in excavation, bearing features of the images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas.<sup>1</sup>

The faith, however, reached its peak of glory during the rule of the Maitraka rulers of Valabhi (modern Vala; lat. 21° 52' N.; long. 71° 57' E.; District Bhavnagar), who, notwithstanding their Brahmanical creed, cherished the establishments by sumptuous grants. Under the fostering care of this dynasty, thus, grew up the Buddhist educational and scholastic centre of Valabhi reputed as much as Nālandā in the days of I-tsing (p. 143).

<sup>1</sup> S. R. Rao, *Excavations at Amreli* (Baroda, 1966), p. 98.



Though hardly any buildings are now visible on the surface at Vala and indeed the find of Buddhist images is extremely rare, which may be partly due to the prominence of Hinayāna here, about two dozen copper-plate charters, many terracotta tablets with the Buddhist creed in characters of about the seventh century A.D., some terracotta plaques with the representation of a *stūpa*<sup>2</sup> and a few fragmentary stone slabs, bearing some words like *Tathāgata*, *Ratna-traya* and *Saṅgha*, were brought to light at this historical site. The copper-plate grants refer to a large number of monasteries existing here and in its neighbourhood.

One of the important monasteries of Valabhī was the one built by the *upāsikā* Duḍḍā, the sister's daughter of the Maitraka ruler Dhruvasena I, the latter granting to it two villages in the Gupta-Valabhī years 216 (A.D. 535-36) and 217 (A.D. 536-37). This *viḥāra*, due to lavish grants for its maintenance and persistent patronage for nearly a century and a half from the successors of Dhruvasena I, flourished tremendously. Indeed, it became the head of a *viḥāra-maṇḍala* into which were included the monasteries built by the *Āchārya Bhikṣu* Sthiramati, *Āchārya Bhikṣu* Vimalagupta, Gohaka and the merchant Kakka.

King Śilāditya I Dharmāditya<sup>3</sup> (end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century A.D.) of this dynasty outdid others in his generous gifts. He not only endowed richly many of the existing *viḥāras*, but he himself constructed one at Varṇśakaṭa.

Besides these monasteries there were others, of which Buddhadāsa-viḥāra, Abhyantarikā-viḥāra built by Mimmā, Bhaṭārka-viḥāra, Bappapādiya-viḥāra built by the *Āchārya Bhadanta* Sthiramati, the nunneries built by Yakshaśūra, Pūrṇabhaṭṭā and the merchant Ajita and a *viḥāra* made by the *Divirapati* Skandabhaṭṭa, the last constructed at Yodhāvaka, deserve mention. Yakshaśūra-viḥāra, like Duḍḍā-viḥāra, became in course of time the head of a *viḥāra-maṇḍala*; indeed, the Pūrṇabhaṭṭā-viḥāra was included within its precincts.

The gifts to these monasteries consisted of usually villages and fields and rarely wells, tanks and flower-gardens (*pushpa-vāṭikā*). The objects of the grants were mostly to provide for the necessities of the monks like food, beds, cloth and medicine, for the ceremonial worship of the images of Buddha with perfumes, flowers, incense, lamps and ointment (*gandha-pushpa-dhūpa-dīpa-tail-ādi*) and for the repairs to the structures.<sup>4</sup> Rarely, there was

<sup>2</sup> One such plaque is now in display in the Bhavnagar Museum. The *stūpa* in this plaque has a square base, a moulded played-out drum, a cylindrical dome (the drum and the dome together presenting the appearance of a bell) and a square *harmikā* crowned by a *chhatravali*. At the bottom of the *stūpa* is the Buddhist creed in characters of about the seventh century A.D.

<sup>3</sup> According to Hiuen Tsang (Watters, *op. cit.*, II, p. 242) this ruler who was also the king of Mo-la-p'o (portions of western Malwa) constructed by the side of his palace a Buddhist temple, 'extremely artistic in structure and ornament, in which were images of the Seven Buddhas' and held every year a great religious assembly to which were invited Buddhists from all quarters.

<sup>4</sup> One of the aims for the gifts recorded in the copper-plates of Mahārāja Aḥivarmaṇ (*Journ. Oriental Institute*, XIX, 1970, pp. 279-85), unearthed from a mound at Ambalas (District Junagadh), was to provide for the restoration of *dhūpā*, *leṭṭā* and *ālekhyā* of the nunnery at Udbheda. The same mound yielded two other sets of copper-plates—one set issued by the Maitraka ruler Dhruvasena I for a grant to the community of monks in the monastery at Āmalakavasatī (modern Ambalas) and the other by Śilāditya I for a grant to the monks of the Bhaṭṭa-viḥāra at Kuberanagara. Apparently, Ambalas and its environs nourished flourishing Buddhist establishments in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries A.D.



also a provision for acquisition of books. Śīlāditya in his own monastery even made additional provision for the ceremonial bathing of the image and the performance of dance and music (*snāna-gandha-dīpa-taila-pushpa-mālya-vādyā-gīta-nṛity-ādi-upayogāya*).

Hiuen Tsang found above hundred monasteries with six thousand monks of the Hinayāna Sāmmitiya sect and several Aśokan *stūpas* in the kingdom of Valabhī. King Dhruvasena II (circa A.D. 629-41), son-in-law of Emperor Śīlāditya (Harshavardhana) of Kanauj, was said to have been a believer in Buddhism. Hiuen Tsang referred to the large monastery near the capital in which 'the P'usas Guṇamati and Sthiramati had lodged, and composed treatises which had great vogue'.<sup>5</sup>

Gujarat at the time of Hiuen Tsang was divided into several principalities like Bharukachchha<sup>6</sup> (Broach) where there were above ten monasteries with three hundred monks, K'i-t'a with above ten monasteries and about one thousand monks, Ānandapura (Vadnagar) having more than ten monasteries with one thousand monks and Su-la-ch'a (Surāshtra) with more than fifty monasteries and three thousand monks.

At the time of I-tsing, Valabhī, as a seat of learning drawing scholars from distant lands, ranked with Nālandā. Thus, I-tsing, while speaking about the method of learning followed by the Chinese students resorting to India, remarks: 'Thus instructed by their teachers and instructing others they pass two or three years, generally in the Nālanda monastery in Central India, or in the country of Valabhī (Walā) in Western India. These two places are like Chin-ma, Shih-ch'ü, Lung-mên, and Ch'ue-li in China, and there eminent and accomplished men assemble in crowds, discuss possible and impossible doctrines, and after having been assured of the excellence of their opinions by wise men, become far famed for their wisdom'.<sup>7</sup>

That the religion lingered in Gujarat even after the fall of the Maitrakas is revealed by two copper-plate charters of Dantivarman<sup>8</sup> and Dhruva Dhārāvarsha<sup>9</sup> of the Gujarat branch of the Rāshtrakūṭa dynasty. Respectively dated A.D. 867 and 884, both of them record grants to the monastery of Kāmpīlya-tīrtha (Kāmpīlya-tīrthakīya-vihāra). The earlier one mentions the grant of the village of Chokkhakuti (modern Chokhad, lat. 21° 1' N.; long. 72° 59' E.), to be enjoyed by the succession of disciples of the Ārya-saṅgha for meeting the cost of perfumes, flowers, incense, lamps, ointments and repairs. The second charter, the object of which was the grant of the village Dhaḍayāsaha, informs further that this *mahāvihāra* was built by Kāmpīlya-muni and contained five hundred monks. The site of this Buddhist establishment has been variantly located at Kapletha (on the north bank of the Mindhola, 1½ miles north of Chokhad) and Kaplia on the south bank of the Mindhola, 25 miles east of Katargam (on the outskirts of Surat).

To about the ninth century A.D. belongs the elaborate sculpture of Tārā housed in

<sup>5</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), p. 246.

<sup>6</sup> The gift of a two-celled cave by two brothers, called Buddhāmīta and Buddhārakshita, of this place is recorded in characters of the second or third century A.D. on a cave at Junnar.

<sup>7</sup> *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago* by I-tsing, tr. J. Takakusu (Oxford, 1896), p. 177.

<sup>8</sup> *Epigraphia Indica*, VI (1900-01), pp. 285-94.

<sup>9</sup> *Epigraphia Indica*, XXII (1933-34), pp. 64-76.



the Dhāraṇī-mātā temple located by the side of a ravine near the foot of the Taranga hill, on the west bank of the Sabarmati. Taranga is now a sacred Jaina *tīrtha* (place of pilgrimage), but originally it was a Buddhist centre and represented the ancient Tārāpura, a town named after the Buddhist goddess Tārā, in which, according to the Jaina work *Kumārāpāla-pratibodha*, a king named Venī-Vatsarāja built a temple of Tārā before his conversion to Jainism. Near this temple is another shrine, known as Tārā-mātā temple, in which are also noticed several Buddhist images.<sup>10</sup>

Revealing light on the condition of Buddhism in about the eleventh century A.D. is thrown by a manuscript of A.D. 1015 (no. Add. 1643), preserved in the Cambridge University Library, which illustrates Tārā of Tārāpura, Kurukullā of Kurukullā-śikhara and Chundā of Vumkarā-nagara, all in Lāṭadeśa (southern Gujarat). This leaves little room for doubt that the Buddhism, that was practised in this tract about this time, was strongly imbued with ideas of Tantricism.

According to Chau Ju-kua (*circa* A.D. 1225), Hu-ch'a-la (Gujarat) had at his time 'four thousand Buddhist temple buildings, in which live over twenty thousand dancing-girls who sing twice daily while offering food to the Buddha (i.e., the idols) and while offering flowers'.<sup>11</sup> The veracity of this statement is, however, open to question.

#### A. DEVNIMORI

The remains at Devnimori (lat. 23° 39' N.; long. 73° 26' E.; District Sabarkantha) are situated in a picturesque vale on the bank of the Meshvo near the well-known Shamalaji where the river enters the plains of northern Gujarat after cutting through the outliers of the Aravallis. As a result of excavations from 1960 to 1963, the site has yielded a towering *śāriṛika stūpa* (called Mahāstūpa in the inscription of the casket found within its core), two monasteries, four votive *stūpas*, an apsidal temple, a rectangular structure and a protecting wall. Among these structures, two—the Mahāstūpa and a spacious monastery (Monastery 1, called Mahāvihāra in the same casket-inscription), both of bricks—are particularly impressive even in their ruined condition and bespeak an affluent state in this Buddhist centre from the fourth century A.D. to the seventh century.

The lofty *stūpa*, with the upper portion missing, rests on two square platforms rising in diminishing tiers, the lower one being nearly 86 ft. square and 7 ft. 10 in. high and the upper one about 70 ft. square. The overall extant height of the *stūpa* is 37 ft. from the surrounding area. Each face of the lower platform is divided into eleven bays by twelve pilasters with moulded bases and Indo-Corinthian capitals. Below the pilasters and bays is a set of three broad mouldings, of which the central one is a torus. Likewise, there are mouldings above the pilasters, but they are arranged corbelwise; the most receding is the lowest bearing trellis-pattern; the next is carved with stylized acanthus-leaves which also occur on the capitals of the pilasters; the third is in the form of a row of brackets; and the fourth is a plain but broad moulding, rounded at the top.

<sup>10</sup> *Journ. Gujarat Res. Soc.*, I, no. 4, 1939, pp. 67 ff.; *ibid.*, VIII, 2 & 3, 1946, p. 112.

<sup>11</sup> K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Foreign Notices of South India* (Madras, 1939), p. 141.



The terrace over the lower platform is about 8 ft. broad. The facing of the upper platform is mostly missing. On each face there are nine bays with ten pilasters. The pilasters are reduced to their bases. Below them run bold mouldings as in the lower platform. The bays of the upper platform<sup>12</sup> are relieved with ornate arches, some of the framed niches of which presumably contained, like the Main Stūpa of Mirpur-khas (p. 132), beautiful terracotta figures of Buddha; as many as twenty-six<sup>13</sup> (some in fragments) figures (photos 93 and 94) have been found in the débris. These figures are all in *dhyāna-mudrā*. The facing of the superstructure above the upper platform has disappeared completely leaving its massive core to an appreciable height.

The deposits at different levels, but always in the centre, of the solid core of the stūpa are both rich and varied. Thus, at a depth of about 7 ft. from the top occurred a terracotta seated image of Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā* facing east. Below this and at a depth of about 12 ft. from the top was encountered a stone casket within an earthen pot. The lid of the casket is inscribed with the *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra* (in Prakrit language), a particularly favourite text for the purpose of enshrinement within stūpas in the Kushān and Gupta periods. The inscription (in Sanskrit language) on the body of the casket records that the Mahāstūpa was constructed in the precincts of the Mahāvihāra during the rule of King Rudrasena in the year 127 of the Kathika rulers. The date, referred to the so-called Kalachuri-Chedi era on palaeographic considerations, is A.D. 375 which falls within the regnal period of Rudrasena III of the Kshatrapa dynasty. The casket held in its turn, apart from gold and silver foils, a copper container, the latter bearing silk bags, a small oval bottle in gold and some organic material.

Further below, at a depth of about 24 ft. from the top was noticed a stepped pyramidal construction of brickwork, immediately below which lay a pear-shaped pot with eight silver Kshatrapa coins, gold and silver foils and powdered material. At a further depth of 9 ft. 10 in. were eight terracotta seated images of Buddha. At a still further depth of about 5 ft., 39 ft. from the top and a little below the bottom course of the stūpa was found an earthen pot containing a cylindrical schist reliquary with ashes.

In about the sixth century A.D., the stūpa underwent minor repairs which account for the indiscriminate re-use of carved bricks and the straightening of the mouldings of the platform at places.

Monastery 1, to the south-west of the Main Stūpa, is of the usual *chatuh-śālā* type and had presumably a tiled roof. It underwent minor extensions twice and was repaired at least once. The earliest phase, ascribed to about the beginning of the fourth century A.D., consists of a brick-paved open courtyard, around which are a verandah and a range of cells, the latter beyond the verandah. The entrance-porch is in the centre of the northern flank, while the shrine, which faces the porch, is on the southern

<sup>12</sup> The better-preserved façades of the lower platform do not indicate that they ever accommodated any images within their shallow bays.

<sup>13</sup> The possibility of some of these images having been within the niches of the drum-façades cannot be entirely ruled out.



side. There is a platform projecting from the centre of all the four flanks of the verandah which probably accommodated the steps. The outer facing of the southern peripheral wall is distinguished by a curved moulding. The brickwork exhibits fine joints.

In the second phase of the monastery, dated to the second half of the fourth century A.D., the plinth-level of the monastery was heightened by 4 ft. and that of the courtyard by 2 ft. 5½ in. with a filling of silt and gravel. The peripheral wall was also widened by erecting an abutting wall, the base of the latter being decorated with a set of mouldings including a torus. The third phase, of about the sixth century A.D., ushered in some more additions in the outer side of the northern flank. There is a marked deterioration in the quality of the brickwork of this phase which reveals wide joints.

To the east of Monastery 1 is Monastery 2, also of bricks but of smaller dimensions. Built after the fourth century A.D., it is, again, of the *chatuh-sālā* type. The monastery is partly exposed.

The apsidal temple, immediately to the south-west corner of the Main Stūpa, is in the last stage of decay. Made of bricks, it consists, as usual, of an apse, a nave and aisles.

### B. SANA

The remains of the Buddhist establishment at Sana (lat. 20° 56' N.; long. 71° 10' E.; District Junagarh), 15 miles north-east of the Una railway-station, consist of nearly sixty caves on three spurs around the three sides of an elevated plateau which slopes sharply down to the stream of Rupen on the west. The plateau itself bears scanty traces of foundations of structures, made of large bricks. The caves were excavated at different heights of the spurs, mostly approached by rock-cut stairs. Considerable attention was paid towards the supply of water by excavating beside the caves, as at Kanheri, a fairly large number of tanks with small oblong mouths, the latter generally having rock-cut walls on three sides.

The caves are marked by an austere simplicity and complete absence of sculpture. Of *chaitya-grihas* we have three specimens. All of them are apsidal halls with flat ceilings. Two of them (Caves 3 and 26) have a long verandah with plain pillars resting on a raised basement and supporting a beam below the flat ceiling, while the third has a deep verandah or porch now completely open in the front. All of them have a single door, but Cave 26 (photo 95) has two small windows, flanking the door. The rock-cut stūpa at the apse of Cave 26 is the best preserved of the three stūpas in the *chaitya-grihas*: it consists of a cylindrical drum, 7 ft. 10 in. in diameter and 3 ft. 11 in. in height, with an inconspicuous moulding at the base, and a dome (4 ft. 1 in. high) with a concave neck above the ledge (6 in. wide) of the drum; the crowning element above the dome is now missing. The other two stūpas are badly damaged; still the outlines of high drums and bulbous domes are readily recognizable. There is a small cell by the sinister side of the hall of Cave 3 with which it is connected by a door.

The monasteries also present little significant features. They generally comprise a pillared verandah usually with one or two cells at the back and very rarely three or



four cells. The cells have each a door, rarely windows (perforated only in one case) and often a recess in their walls which served as beds as evident from rock-cut pillows on them in some cases. The ceilings of the verandahs project considerably towards the front, and often correspondingly there are landings below it. Most of the caves have a small open court with sloping side walls, the latter in conformity with the configuration of the rock. The plan of Cave 48 is a departure. It consists of a verandah with two pillars, square below and above and octagonal in the middle, and two pilasters, an astylar long hall with a flat ceiling, a central door and benches on two sides, beyond which are four cells (on each side), and a chamber with two front pillars and pilasters at the back of the hall. The verandah with a recess at either side is approached by steps. The pillars and pilasters are connected by back-rests.

Two halls are of an unusually large size. Of these, Cave 2 with a flat ceiling is an oblong excavation, 69 ft. long, 60 ft. wide and 17 ft. high, with a row of six oblong pillars and two pilasters in the front and with a landing having the projection of the roof of the hall above; the open court in front has dwelling-cells cut in the side walls. The ceiling of the hall of Cave 22 is supported by four pillars with *ghata*-capitals, arranged in a square. Around the walls are benches. It has a central door and a single cell on the dexter and is fronted by a long verandah, the latter having a recess at either end.

### C. TALAJA

More or less contemporaneous with the excavations at Sana and outcome of the same architectural activity are the caves at Talaja (lat.  $21^{\circ} 21' N.$ ; long.  $72^{\circ} 2' E.$ ; District Bhavnagar). The caves, numbering not less than forty, are perched at different heights of a single isolated picturesque hill, situated near the confluence of the Satrunji and the Talaji, the latter flowing past by it. The top of the hill, on which is now an extensive Jaina establishment, affords a panoramic view of the surroundings—stretches of arid plain land, relieved at the distance by a few hills including that of Palitana with its Jaina establishment and skirted in the east and south-east by the sea into which the Satrunji empties itself barely 2 miles away from the caves.

The caves, like those at Sana, have little architectural merit. Even the apsidal *chaitya-griha* of Sana is absent here, the dilapidated base of what appears to have been a *stupa* in the sanctuary of a monastery being the only possible indication of the religious affiliation of this series. To make matters worse, the front walls of most of the caves have crumbled away, the pitted rock, not homogeneous in texture, being unsuitable for excavation. Two of the caves (4 and 30) only bear a few carvings. Rock-cut tanks with small mouths form a regular feature of this establishment as well.

The monasteries resemble in layout those at Sana. They usually consist of a few cells at the back of a pillared verandah, though a few typical rock-cut quadrangular monasteries also exist. One (Cave 3) of the latter type consists of an open verandah with a bench, a long astylar hall with a spacious double-leafed door and a bench on two sides, and ranges of cells—four on the sinister, three and a recess on the dexter and a single chamber at the back. The last appears to have contained



a central *stūpa*, the scanty remains of the base of which now exist. In Cave 19 the hall has two pillars and pilasters marking it off from the plain open verandah and is surrounded by cells, three on each side, one being unfinished. The central cell on the rear side has against its back wall a plain rock-cut pedestal, evidently, for the object of worship, now missing.

Cave 30 (photo 96), like Cave 2 of Sana, is a colossal hall, 75 ft. long, 67 ft. wide and 19 ft. high, approached by a long flight of steps with a moonstone at the bottom. A set of three oblong holes on either side of the stair suggests the existence of sloping railings. The hall with a flat ceiling has a row of four pillars and two pilasters in the front and a 2-ft. wide running bench on three sides. The pillars, with square tops and octagonal shafts, have lost their lower portions. The façade of the hall is relieved with a railing resting on a projected beam with ends of rafters, a recess with a rounded moulding below and the upper portions of a series of five halls with arched roofs above the railing; inside each arched roof is carved the façade of the timber-work of the nave with a vaulted ceiling springing from shafts and half-arched aisles of a *chaitya-griha*. The court in front of the hall is equally impressive and has benches along the sides. Into these benches and also in the rear end of the court are cut the oblong mouths (some of them provided with detachable shutters) of large cisterns excavated below the floor. In the right side wall of the court are excavated a landing and a verandah with two cells at its back and a third on the dexter. It is not unlikely that the hall was used as a *bhojana-maṇḍapa* (refectory).

## 8. MAHARASHTRA

Buddhism obtained a permanent footing in this territory following the two special missions, one to Aparānta (northern Konkan) and the other to Mahārāshṭra, in the reign of Aśoka (p. 10). The importance of the Deccan in the history of Buddhist monuments is supreme, for it has bequeathed to us a priceless legacy in the form of a magnificent series of caves extending over a period of more than a thousand years. The movement started at least as early as the beginning of the second century B.C., when the Buddhists of Bhaja (p. 151) and Ajanta (p. 175) excavated, out of the live trap rock of the Deccan, monumental replicas of the architectural forms. The excavation-activity reached its consummation in the Gupta-Vākāṭaka period and ended with the latest caves of Ellora (pp. 185-88).

The unfinished caves afford an ample idea about the method of excavation. After selecting the cliff-side of a rock, the outline of the façade was broadly chalked out. Excavation then started from the ceiling, which was finished first. The work next continued downwards by the cutting of deep alleys with sharp and heavy instruments like the pickaxe, followed by the breaking of the intervening ridges, leaving solid blocks for pillars wherever necessary, till the floor was reached, which was the last to receive attention. The initial work of excavation alone was done by the pickaxe, and the rest, including the finishing and carving, was entirely executed by the hammer and chisel. The work of quarrying, dressing and finishing went almost hand in hand. After finishing the façade and the verandah, wherever there were provisions for the latter, the excavator went deep into the interior, the process of the excavation, however, being the same. The complete operation, as one can easily visualize, demanded enormous patience, carefulness, accuracy and delicacy on the part of the rock-cutters and artists to translate the audacious plans of the master designers.

Notwithstanding their being the work of sculptors instead of masons and engineers as required in a true piece of architecture, these rock-cut emulations of the buildings have an important place in the history of Buddhist architecture. For, they alone have preserved the internal features of the structural prototypes, none of which is now intact up to their ceiling. In them only we have the complete record of the evolution of the Buddhist monasteries and *chaitya-grihas*, their value further increased by their sedulous imitation of the free-standing constructions not only in the general form and elevation, but also in the scrupulous reproduction of the minutest details to the points of representing the raking of the pillars and the nail-heads of the timber-work, which are not only unnecessary but, in fact, irrational in rock-cut structures. The imitative spirit is carried even further when the actual wooden curved beams with dovetailed joints and rafters were used below the vaulted ceilings of the *chaitya-grihas*. But these superfluous accessories are now our sole clue to the ancient method of construction of the barrel-vaulted roof.

Their further claim to distinction lies in their preserving on their walls the aspirations of the generations of artists in the form of a vast galaxy of reliefs, both high and low,



of different periods and styles from the initial stage of experiment to maturity and ultimate degeneration. One curious feature about the Buddhist centres of the Deccan is their initial reticence in reproducing the image of Buddha, the earliest of such relief being the one on a pillar in front of the *chaitya-griha* at Kanheri (p. 166).

In the field of painting, however, their importance is even more outstanding, as they alone, except the meagre remnants in the caves of Bagh (p. 99), contain the classics of the Indian murals. But their unique value lies in their being the sole repository of the earliest specimens of Buddhist paintings (pp. 175 and 176) in India.

The travels of Hiuen Tsang brought him also to Kung-kan-na-pu-lo (Konkan) and Mo-ha-la-ch'a (Mahārāshtra). The former had at that time more than a hundred monasteries with about ten thousand monks of both Hinayāna and Mahāyāna tenets and an Aśoka *stūpa*, while the latter had above a hundred monasteries with over five thousand monks, also of both the Vehicles, five Aśoka *stūpas*, besides a large number of other *stūpas* of stone and brick. Mahārāshtra was at that time under the powerful Chālukya king Pulakeśin II (A.D. 610-42) of Badami. Hiuen Tsang's description of the establishment at Ajanta, then under Mahārāshtra, is particularly vivid.<sup>1</sup>

That Buddhism was yet a vital faith in the eighth-ninth century A.D. during the rule of the Rāshtrakūṭas, who had overthrown the Chālukyas, is proved by the inscriptions at Kanheri (pp. 167 and 168), recording gifts of the Śilāhāra feudatories of the Rāshtrakūṭas. Lingering traces of Buddhism in Maharashtra are available as late as the twelfth century A.D. Thus, the Śilāhāra ruler Gaṇḍarāditya in his Miraj plate of A.D. 1110 granted land for the maintenance of the images of Buddha, Arhat and Mahādeva, installed by him on the margin of the tank Gaṇḍasamudra, excavated also by him.

Not less than half a dozen important deities and *stūpas* of Konkan are illustrated in the Cambridge University Library manuscript (no. Add. 1643) of A.D. 1015; they are Pratyeka-Buddha-sikhara-chaitya and Khadga-chaitya of Kṛishṇagiri (modern Kanheri), Sahasrabhujā-Lokanātha of Śivapura, Lokanātha of Khairavana, Mahāviśva-Lokanātha and Maṇṇava-Lokanātha-chaitya.

The number of the sites, with important caves, runs into several dozens, of which Bhaja, Bedsa, Karla, Junnar, Kondane, Kondivte, Kanheri, Nasik, Pitalkhora, Ajanta, Aurangabad, Ellora, Ghatotkacha cave at Gulwada, Sailawadi, Bhandara, Kuda, Kol, Karadhi, Mahad, Sirwal, Wai, Lonad, Nadsur and Karsambla are fairly well-known. The first twelve are briefly noticed below.

The sites with structural edifices are rather rare in this region, which may be partly due to inadequate exploration. On such site is Sopara (p. 188), the findspot of the fragments of the Eighth and Ninth Rock-Edicts of Aśoka.

Another prospective site is Pauni (District Bhandara), 26 miles by road from Bhandara and 56 miles from Nagpur. The mounds containing the remains are yet to be excavated,<sup>2</sup> but their potentiality is avouched by the discovery, during agricultural

<sup>1</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), pp. 239 and 240.

<sup>2</sup> Subsequent to the preparation of this text and sending the matter to the press, the site was excavated jointly by the Archaeological Survey of India and the Nagpur University. The report is yet to be published.



digging, of four pieces of uprights and a fragment of a coping which must have formed part of an imposing railing around the processional path of a *stūpa*. The finds also include fragments of life-sized statues, one with a turban similar to that of Bharhut and Sanchi. One of the uprights presents the reliefs of a *stūpa*, the *Bodhi* tree, devotees and a barrel-vaulted sanctuary enshrining a pillar crowned by a wheel, the execution being reminiscent of that of the early phase of Sanchi. From the style of these reliefs and the palaeography of the dedicatory inscriptions on two of the uprights and the coping it is abundantly clear that the railing belonged to about the second century B.C.

Ter (District Osmanabad), well-known for its apsidal temple (p. 47), is yet another site which yielded, during recent excavations, a *stūpa* with *āyakas* and an apsidal *chaitya-griha*, both of brick and of the second century A.D. The brickwork within the core of the *stūpa* is in the form of an eight-spoked wheel. The carved limestone slabs and copings, found at the site, bespeak the influence of Amaravati School here.<sup>3</sup>

#### A. BHAJA

This group, consisting of twenty-two excavations, is on a hill, near the village of Bhaja (lat. 18° 44' N.; long. 73° 29' E.; District Poona), 1 mile from the Malavli railway-station on the Bombay-Poona line. The view from the caves facing the valley of Indrayani river, with the two towering Maratha forts, Lohagarh and Visapur, along the adjoining hill-tops and with the Vulban dam visible at a distance, is arresting.

Unlike the neighbouring group at Karla (p. 154), the caves here are the product of the early phase of excavation alone, going back to the period when the image of Buddha was not introduced here. The latest excavation here is a cistern, referable to the end of the second century A.D. on the evidence of the palaeography of an inscription. The caves, however, remained in use at least till the fifth-sixth century A.D. which saw the embellishment of the *chaitya-griha* with the painted figures of Buddha.

The *chaitya-griha* (photos 51 and 97) has been regarded as the earliest of its class in live rock, as it provides the closest copy of the wooden prototype. The date—second century B.C.—ascribed to it long ago on stylistic considerations is happily corroborated by the palaeography of the two short inscriptions discovered recently on the wooden beams themselves below the vault. These records, short dedicatory that they may be, not only provide us with the latest date of the excavation, but also prove beyond all dispute that the timber beams that span the nave and the apse and the longitudinal purlins fixed in the upper edges of the beams are in that position for a period of not less than two thousand and one hundred years!

Though the wooden façade below the *chaitya*-arch and also the wooden screen of the *chaitya*-window have disappeared completely, it is not difficult to visualize the scheme and design of the frontage with the help of the extant mortice-holes aided by the miniature replicas carved on the sides of the great arch. The octagonal pillars within the cave have a strong inward rake.

<sup>3</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1961-62—A Review*, p. 102; *ibid.* for the year 1967-68, p. 35.



In consonance with the early date of the *chaitya-griha* is the form of the rock-cut *stūpa* (photo 97) inside. It has a prominent hemispherical dome resting on a cylindrical drum. Inside the double railing on the top of the dome is a socket for the post of the missing wooden umbrella. The remaining sockets in the dome and the drum most probably contained relics as at Pitalkhora (p. 172).

The rows of pin-holes on the fronton of the arch suggest some embellishments, most probably in woodwork. The façade is effectively carved mainly with the simple motifs of railing, projected ones supported by plain cut-out brackets, and the front of the vaulted halls, one of which contains a couple.

Among the monasteries, Cave 18, which consists of a pillared verandah with a cell on the right side and a recess on the left and an astylar hall with a bench along the left side and two cells each (one with a rock-cut bed) on the back and right sides, is of unique interest on account of the florid treatment of the wall-surface, unusual in an early monastery.

The columns of this monastery are square below and above and octagonal in the middle with a chamfering of the arrises. But the pilaster on the right side of the recess has a bell-shaped lotus, over which rear up several corbels, the topmost carrying a capital carved in the form of sphinx-like figures—busts of a male and a female with bovine bodies. The back wall of the verandah has two doors, giving access to the hall, and a *jālī*-window. The doors are flanked by *dvāra-pālas*—three in all—lavishly bejewelled, their costume rather unusual. Above the doorways and extended over the right cell and the left recess is a projected member, over which reliefs of *stūpas* alternate with figures supporting a corbelled superstructure.

The two compositions (photo 98) which are world-famous, but satisfactory identification of which is yet awaited, are on the sinister wall of the verandah. The one on the dexter of the cell-door and partly carried backward on the back wall of the verandah depicts a royal personage, attended by two women, one holding a *chāmara* and the other a *chhatra*, driving in the air a wheeled quadriga of horses, the latter trampling down a mis-shapen demonish figure, followed by three others; one of the latter holds the feet of the horse of one of the two cavaliers in the retinue of the main figure who has been identified by some with Sūrya dispelling the demon of darkness.

The corresponding panel on the right side of the door is even more elaborate and illusionistic. A majestic person with an *ankuśa* (elephant-goad) in hand, in the company of his attendant carrying a banner and a spear, drives a mighty elephant. The latter holds aloft in its trunk a whole tree pulled with roots, causing a mortal discomfiture to the denizens of the tree. Below the feet of the elephant are composed two scenes separated by a sacred tree. The left shows a princely pair with attendants witnessing a dance accompanied by music. Juxtaposed on the right side is a forest scene in which a horse-headed woman (*yakshi asva-mukhī*) tries to get hold of a man.

The ceiling of the verandah is arched and seemingly rests on a frame of rock-cut beams and rafters.

The walls of the hall are also embellished. The cell-doors, which incline inwards, are framed with a motif resembling the façade of a *chaitya-griha*. Two such representations



occur on the left wall, and in each is a *dvāra-pāla* with a spear. These are connected by railings, corbels and smaller *chaitya*-arches, and between them are arched niches.

The remaining monasteries are of the ordinary type with a verandah and an astylar hall with cells on one, two or three sides. There are, however, a few exceptions; one such is a single circular cell with a flat ceiling and an oblong verandah; another circular cell has a *stūpa* inside. Often the walls of the hall are relieved with the conventional compositions of railings, *chaitya*-arches and corbels. The cells have in most cases benches, the latter sometimes having small recesses. The walls of the cells in a few instances have niches. Perforated windows are also fairly common. The verandah of only one of these caves has pillars with a *ghaṭa*-base resting on a stepped pedestal and a capital consisting of a pair of addorsed animals on a corbelled abacus. Most of the monasteries have cisterns attached to them.

One of the excavations is irregular and may be regarded as the cemetery, as in it are fourteen rock-cut *stūpas*, some bearing the names of the *sthaviras* in whose memory they were made. One of them is distinguished specially for its highly ornamental *harmikā* carved with *chaitya*-arches besides railings and corbels.

#### B. BEDSA

The caves near Bedsa (lat. 18° 43' N.; long. 73° 32' E.; District Poona) consist of a *chaitya-griha*, a monastery, two single independent cells, an unfinished cave, a few cisterns within recesses, a tiny apsidal roofless excavation with a *stūpa* cut in memory of a mendicant and an unfinished circular cell with a *stūpa*. Though the smallest, this group has at its credit several novel features of interest, and the visitor is amply compensated for his tiresome journey along a rocky uneven track for a distance of 5 miles from Kamshet, the first station down the Bombay-Poona railway-line after Malavli. This group is located in the south face of the same range of hills which contain the caves near Bhaja (p. 151), the latter being 5½ miles north-west.

As already noted (p. 48), the *chaitya-griha* (first century B.C.-A.D.), the chief focus of attraction, has a distinct place in the evolution of the rock-cut *chaitya-grihas*. A long narrow passage through unworked masses of live rock, which acts as an effective foil to the exquisite façade but at the same time masks the view of its major portion, leads to the lofty verandah or portico in front of the sanctuary (fig. 16, p. 49).

This verandah with its boldly-carved colonnade, bespeaking a large aesthetic vision of the master-sculptor, lends a unique character to the edifice. The pillars and pilasters, two each, have large *ghaṭa*-bases, each resting on a pedestal of four graduated tiers, and octagonal shafts (pilasters having three complete sides and two incomplete), each crowned by a bell-shaped fluted lotus, over which is an *āmalaka* within a square frame supporting a corbelled abacus. On this abacus kneel in repose addorsed animals in pairs (horses, elephants and a single bull) with riders—man and woman. The pillars have each two such pairs, one facing outwards and the other inwards, while the pilasters have only one facing the pillars. Figures, both human and animal, are remarkable for their plastic treatment. The dignified bearing of the strong, stately and self-assured



proportion, warmth of human emotion and chastity of design rarely met with elsewhere. The pillars at the back of the apse and also in the front row are plain octagons.

The *stūpa* (photo 50) of the apse has a drum in two terraces, both crowned by a railing. The bottom side of the wooden umbrella, presumably coeval with the excavation, is carved minutely with delicate patterns including a lotus.

A large number of individuals including some foreigners (*yavanas*) from Dhenukākata—a prosperous centre of trade—participated in the pious donation, their names being inscribed on the portions excavated by their contributions. A large portion of the cost was, however, borne by a merchant from Vaijayantī (modern Banavasi, District North Kanara). One individual from Sopāraka, modern Sopara (p. 188), donated a pillar containing a relic (*sasariro thabho*) which is now missing, though the socket for it, with lotus-petals around, still exists.

The monasteries, mostly ruined, are plain and do not possess any interesting features. The halls are invariably astylar, and only a few cells have beds. Some of the earlier cells (second century A.D.) were embellished in about the sixth century A.D. with figures of Buddha. A female deity, most probably Tārā but in a nascent form, occurs in one such relief in Cave 2, where she, with the stalk of a lotus in her hand, stands by the side of the *chāmara*-bearing Padmapāṇi. In this particular relief and also in a few others a crown is held above the head of Buddha by flying figures. In another relief (Cave 10) the attendant Bodhisattvas are seen in the company of a female.

As already noted, there are two monasteries referable to the Gupta-Vākāṭaka age. One (Cave 6), perched at a higher level and approached through one of the cells of Cave 5 by a ladder, consists of a court with a parapet at the front edge, a pillared verandah, a hall with two doors and two windows and a bench having sockets for a wooden railing on the left side and plain cells arranged on three sides—three on the right, six on the back and five on the left. The pillars and pilasters have square bases, shafts, first octagonal and next sixteen-sided with three bands above, and fluted *āmalaka*-shaped capitals crowned by two corbels. On the back and right walls of the hall are two reliefs of preaching Buddha. One of them has above his head a crown held by two *gaṇas* carved below an arch issuing from the mouths of two *makaras*.

The second monastery (Cave 11) also comprises a pillared verandah with a moulded plinth and a cell at the left end and a hall with two unfinished cells on the right, four on the back and three on the left. The pillars and pilasters, two each, are of the type of Cave 6. Each pillar is connected with the corresponding pilaster by a backed bench, the front of which is relieved with a balustraded railing. The back wall of the hall has a relief of Buddha in the company of attending Bodhisattvas.

#### D. JUNNAR<sup>a</sup>

The largest concentration of the rock-cut caves is on four distinct hills in various

<sup>a</sup> Derivative of Jūrṇa (from Jirṇa)-nagara, old town. This town lay on an ancient trade-route which ran through the narrow pass of Nanaghat (possibly named after the Sātavāhana queen Nāyanikā, who improved the pass) to Kalyāṇa (modern town of Kalyan), an important commercial centre.



directions but within a radius of 3 miles from the town of Junnar (lat.  $19^{\circ} 10' N.$ ; long.  $73^{\circ} 53' E.$ ; District Poona), about 50 miles from Poona. Though the caves number over one hundred and forty excluding cisterns, which are an ubiquitous feature like Kanheri, very few of them possess singularly attractive features either in sculpture or in architecture. As a general rule, the monasteries are small with a few cells and devoid of ornamentation. Only a few of them have a regular quadrangular plan. Cells are generally arranged on the back side of the verandah which had in some cases detachable pillars, either of masonry or, more possibly, of wood. Some of the caves had most probably wooden fronts. The *chaitya-grihas*, no doubt, evince certain unusual peculiarities, which except in the *chaitya-griha* of the Tuljā-leṇa group, have hardly any bearing on the architectural development of this particular type of architecture.

The smallest group (*circa* first century B.C. to first century A.D.) consists of a line of eleven caves, highly weather-worn,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the north-west of the town. It is known as Tuljā-leṇa after the name of a deity, Tuljā-devī, who has been enshrined in Cave 4, an irregular cave with two cells fronted by a closed verandah, the latter entered through a long but narrow passage.

As noted earlier (p. 44), Cave 3, the *chaitya-griha* (*circa* first century B.C.), is singular of its kind and is characterized by a severe simplicity. Circular on plan (fig. 13, p. 44), it has twelve octagonal pillars arranged in a ring around the central *stūpa*, the latter with a high drum and a hemispherical dome (photo 52). Over the pillars is a circular architrave above which rises the vertical portion of the superstructure ending in a ledge, from the back of which springs the curved portion of the domical ceiling. The vertical walls of the aisles have also a ledge, from which springs the flattish half-arched ceiling. Both the domical ceiling and the half arch were originally braced with wooden beams and rafters. The pillars bear traces of paintings.

Cave 7, though of a single cell, is distinguished by its ornamental façade, relieved with decorated *chaitya*-arches, the central one having below knotted semicircular bands, similar to those above the entrance-door of the *chaitya-griha* of Nasik, *stūpas*, devotees, *kinnaras* and railings.

The upper portion of the façade of Cave 10, of two cells, with front walls missing, is carved with *chaitya*-arches, railings and *jālī*-patterns.

The series next to this group and situated to the south-west of the town is perched, in five separate groups, at different heights on the steep Shivneri hill, the birth-place of Śivāji. The caves, the number of which exceeds fifty, are mostly plain and small, often merely with a verandah and a cell. Many of them are provided with recesses and stone beds, in some cases made in a narrow extension of the cell. The rock-cut cisterns are in overwhelming numbers.

One (*circa* second century A.D.) of the caves of the highest group (no. 67 of Burgess) furnishes an idea of the *bhojana-maṇḍapa* or refectory. A gift of a *yavana*, an Indianized foreigner, it is a spacious hall with a bench on three sides. The front side is open. Most probably, the cave had a timber frontage. Near this cave, but separated by a few cisterns and a cell, is a small oblong *chaitya-griha* (about second century A.D.) with a flat ceiling and a spacious door. It is preceded by a verandah with two pillars and pilasters having



octagonal shafts capped by inverted *kalāṣas* supporting corbels. Connected with the *chaitya-griha* by a door and in line with it is a large hall with a bench at the back and an entrance on the front. There are remains of paintings on the ceiling.

Another *chaitya-griha* (51 of Burgess), also oblong on plan and with a flat ceiling, exists amidst the northernmost group cut on the eastern scarp at about the middle height. It is, however, larger and has an unusual feature in its having only a front aisle demarcated from the nave by a low basement on which are two pillars and two pilasters, each with a *ghaṭa*-base on a stepped pedestal, an octagonal shaft, an inverted *kalāṣa* and a corbelled abacus supporting a square block. The ceiling is painted with square panels containing within concentric circles in the centre and floral motifs at corners. The *stūpa* at the back of the hall has a cylindrical drum with a moulding at the base and a railing at the top, a spherical dome compressed near the bottom, a *harmikā* expanding in the form of stepped corbels above a railing and a *chhatra*, the latter carved on the ceiling. The front wall is pierced with a spacious oblong door flanked by a window on either side. A flight of steps from the door descends to the floor of the plain benched astylar verandah, the ceiling of which is at a lower level than that of the hall. Nobody can suspect for a *chaitya-griha* in this plain-looking cave of the third century A.D. from a distance.

Immediately to its left and sharing the same verandah is a monastery with an astylar hall having three cells on the left and two on the back, the doors of the latter having between them the representation of a *stūpa*. Its ceiling is painted in the manner of the *chaitya-griha*.

One of the caves of this group is known as *bāra-kotri* (twelve-celled), on account of twelve cells distributed equally on three sides of an astylar benched hall, the latter with traces of paintings on the ceiling. In front of the hall is a plain verandah, open in the front.

In line with this group there are two more, the southernmost having a double-storeyed monastery (26 of Burgess). The lower storey comprises a plain verandah, open in front, a spacious hall with a door and two windows and ten cells, some unfinished, on three sides of the hall. A flight, fashioned in the right wall of the hall, lands into the floor of the upper storey which consists of a spacious hall, open in the front but having a pilaster (the left one preserved) on either side, specifically mentioned as the *upasthāna* (service-hall or reception-room) in an inscription of the second century A.D. The pilasters rest on a raised basement and support a lintel below the ceiling. The extant pilaster has a necking of three facets between two semicircles. There is an unfinished excavation, probably the commencement of a cell, in the left wall.

The lowest group on the same face but near the base has its own individual *chaitya-griha*. The latter consists of a plain squarish flat-roofed hall with a single oblong door and a verandah. The pillars and pilasters of the verandah have *ghaṭa*-bases on stepped pedestals and octagonal shafts crowned by upturned *kalāṣas*, over which rest corbelled abaci supporting the architrave. The ceiling of the verandah is at a level lower than that of the hall. There is a socket for relics on the top of the rock-cut drum of the *stūpa* which has a stepped base. The missing dome was evidently of a separate stone.



The hill next to Shivneri is called Manmodi, ancient Mānamukaḍa, situated to the south-south-west of the town. The caves, numbering more than forty excluding the cisterns, here are in three distinct groups.

Beginning at the south-east and proceeding towards the north-west is the Bhīmaśaṅkara group, known after a crude figure carved in modern times in the unfinished *chaitya-griha*. The latter is a plain, oblong astylar hall with a flat ceiling, fronted by a pillared verandah. The object of worship has not been carved, though an oblong rocky mass has been blocked out and separated from the back wall. The pillars and pilasters, two each, of the verandah rest on a backed bench with a central opening for the passage. The front face of this bench is relieved with a two-barred railing. The plinth below is decorated with reliefs of pilasters. The pillars and pilasters have octagonal shafts and inverted *kalāṣas* capped by corbelled abaci, from the centre of which rise low oblong shafts. The chases of the last accommodate the architrave supporting the roof of the verandah. From this architrave project forward flat eaves, in imitation of a balcony, the face of which is carved with a tie-beam, with ends of rafters fixed in it, supporting a railing. Receding from the coping of the railing is a plain *chaitya*-arch, below which is the rock-cut frame of a blind window, which was evidently not meant to be pierced through, as the ceiling of the hall is at a level lower than that of the verandah. The right wall of the narrow court has a three-lined inscription in characters of the second century A.D. The ceilings of the hall and the verandah bear patches of plaster, the verandah having still traces of paintings.

Immediately to its left is a monastery consisting of a pillared verandah and three cells at the back, one of them benched. The pillars and pilasters have *ghaṭa*-bases resting on stepped pedestals, octagonal shafts, inverted *kalāṣas* and four corbels supporting the architrave.

The remaining caves are all small and insignificant. One of them, a small oblong excavation, open in the front, with benches on three sides, contains the dedicatory inscription of Ayama, the minister of King Nahapāna, dated in the year 46 (A.D. 124).

The central group is called Ambā-Ambikā on account of the conversion of one of the caves of this group into a Jaina sanctuary with the additions of the figures of two Tirthaṅkaras and Ambikā, the *śāsanadevī* of Neminātha. It is situated at a distance of four furlongs from this group. In between there are a few scattered excavations, mostly open in the front.

The *chaitya-griha* of this group, too, is incomplete; evidently the colossal fissure, encountered in course of excavations into the hall, was responsible for the abandonment of the project. In front of the hall is a high verandah with pillars and pilasters analogous to those of the *chaitya-griha* in the preceding group, except that these have *ghaṭa*-bases resting on stepped pedestals, the latter fashioned on a low basement. A spacious door leads into the astylar hall, which was designed to have an apsidal plan. The semi-circular ceiling of the hall springs from a ledge of the vertical walls. The back side is unfinished. The dome of the *stūpa* and the *harmikā* are partly finished. Over the entrance-door is a quadrantal moulding, at the back of which is the *chaitya*-window, the finial of the arch reaching the height of the ceiling of the verandah. On the back wall of the



verandah are several inscriptions recording various gifts of individuals, including a Śaka, to the establishment. One of the records gives out the name of the hill as Mānamukāḍa.

Immediately to its left is a small cell, with a flat ceiling, having a rock-cut *stūpa*. The remaining caves are all monasteries, the cells being without beds. None of them seems to be pre-Christian. Neither are they later than the third century A.D.

Half a mile westward is the third group, called Bhūta-leṇa. On way to this group are a few cisterns and a row of four small caves, open in the front.

The *chaitya-griha* (photo 102) of this group, though unfinished, is particularly remarkable on account of the surface treatment of the façade. The apse and the nave with an apsidal plan and a vaulted ceiling, three of the octagonal pillars, the front irregular pillar and the *stūpa* with a battered drum and an elongated dome drawn near the bottom are completed. The front finished aisle has a flat ceiling, but the unfinished aisles on the sides were designed to have half-arched ones. A flight of steps gives access to the spacious entrance of the hall. The ribbed *chaitya*-arch rises from about the central line above the roof of the front aisle and is framed within an oblong projected border with a pleasing array of *chaitya*-windows rising above railings, the latter resting on tie-beams and rafters. The design below the *chaitya*-arch and above the small semicircular window-aperture is novel. Instead of the usual lattice-work we have here a semicircular panel relieved with the half of a full-blown lotus. The large petals have each a figure, while the smaller ones present a lotus with a stalk. In the topmost central petal is Lakshmi, in the next two an elephant with a pitcher in the trunk with the object of bathing Lakshmi and in the remaining ones devotees, both male and female. The finial of the *chaitya*-arch has a *tri-ratna* symbol flanked on either side by a figure, the left winged and having an animal-head above the head and the right a *nāga*. Beyond them is the relief of a *stūpa*. On the pericarp of the half lotus is an inscription of the second century A.D., recording the gift of the façade by a *yavana*.

One of the *vihāra*-caves by its side, which consists of four cells at the back of a verandah, has over the doors of the cells ribbed *chaitya*-arches, the false window inside filled in the manner of the *chaitya-griha* at Nasik (p. 169). The arches, with their finials resting against a railing, are connected with one another by a railing and have *stūpas* and smaller *chaitya*-arches in between.

The main group, consisting of about thirty caves, on the Sulaiman hill, about 3 miles north-north-east of the town, is called Gaṇeśa-leṇa after the intrusive figure of the elephant-headed deity in Cave 7. The latter is an exceptionally large monastery with a verandah and a spacious hall with three doors and windows and having seven cells (some benched) each on the left and right sides and six on the back. The two central cells of the back row were converted into one when the cave had been appropriated by the worshippers of Gaṇeśa. The verandah (photo 103) has six pillars and two pilasters with octagonal shafts resting on benches with back-rests, the latter relieved with a railing rising above a tie-beam and rafters, below which are rows of pilasters. The capitals above the shafts of the pilasters and pillars are similar to those of the nave of Cave 6 described below. From the architrave above the capitals project the eaves relieved with a railing resting on beams and rafters.



Immediately to its right at a lower level and connected with it by a flight of steps is Cave 6, the main *chaitya-griha*, consisting of a pillared verandah and an apsidal hall divided by pillars into an apse, a nave and aisles. The pillars of the verandah resemble those of Cave 3 of Nasik (p. 171; photo 109). The *chaitya*-arch above the railing motif carved on the façade of the verandah is unfinished. Neither is the opening of the window cut through. Among the pillars of the hall, the five at the back are plain octagons. The rest are similar to the verandah-pillars with the difference that the compressed *amalaka* above the inverted *kalasa* has a square block below and above instead of the frame and that the corbelled abacus supports only one pair of addorsed animals facing the nave. The inverted U-shaped ceiling of the nave and apse and the half-arched ceilings of the aisles on the sides have rock-cut beams. The *stupa* at the apse consists of a drum with a moulding below and a railing above, a globular dome and a corbelled *harmikā* with a railing at the base.

There is a dedicatory inscription, in characters of the second century A.D., recording the gift of the *chaitya-griha* by a native of Kalyāṇa.

The other *chaitya-griha* (Cave 14), smaller than Cave 6, is oblong on plan with a flat ceiling and without any pillars. It has a verandah with two pillars and pilasters, each having a *ghata*-base resting on a stepped pedestal and an inverted *kalasa* capped by a corbelled abacus on which rests the architrave from which issue the rafters supporting the caves. The *chhatra* of the *stupa* is carved on the ceiling. There is an inscription, in characters of the second century A.D., on the back wall of the verandah.

The remaining caves are small monasteries, with one, two or three cells preceded in some cases by a verandah. They range in date from the first century to the third century A.D.

On a separate spur of this hill, about a mile from this series, is a small group of caves which include a *chaitya-griha* as well.

#### E. KONDANE

The small but interesting group of caves at Kondane or Kondhana (lat. 18° 51' N.; long. 73° 23' E.; District Kolaba) is excavated in the western face of a high hill, which, with the brooding Rajmachi fort over the peak, overlooks the stream of Ulhas. Due to its utter isolation amidst the mountain-ranges, the group seldom receives the attention it merits. It is about 3 miles north-east of Thakurwadi (between Tunnel nos. 14 and 15) which is an insignificant railway-station between Karjat and Khandala on the Bombay-Poona line.

Notwithstanding its bad state of preservation with only a few fragments of octagonal pillars extant and with the portions of walls missing not only in the front but also in the right side, the *chaitya-griha* exhilarates the visitors by its magnificent façade.

Like the *chaitya-griha* at Bhaja (p. 151), to which it bears a strong family resemblance, it had a wooden screen below the *chaitya*-arch, but the frontmost pillars, from the top of which the semicircular ribs of the *chaitya*-window issue, are here in stone in place of the wooden ones at Bhaja. The woodwork below the vault of the nave



and the half arches of the aisles has disappeared, though two of the semicircular ribs (with ingeniously dovetailed joints) and two radial struts are still *in situ*.

The decoration of the façade has an affinity with that of Bhaja so far as the general composition and the array of motifs like the façades of the *chaitya-grihas*, projected balconies and railings are concerned, and this together with the absence of a stone screen below the *chaitya*-arch has led scholars to group them together as regards their date. But the façade of this cave is richer both in execution and well-balanced arrangements of different parts. Further, the figures of men and women with bewitching bodily movements—some in a group of two or three in amorous dalliance (photo 104)—within compartments separated by a *jāli*-pattern above the lowest projected railing display a decided advance over the figures of Bhaja or the works of Bharhut or Stūpa 2 of Sanchi in the plastic treatment and evince an animated style and maturer art. The delicately-modelled figures are shown in natural poses, their movements free and full of expression and grace. This seems to indicate for these reliefs and also the cave (unless the reliefs are regarded as later additions—a supposition for which there is no sufficient justification) a date not earlier than the first century B.C. The marked stylistic difference cannot be entirely due to the genius of the particular sculptor responsible for the work.

The figures carved in high relief below this frieze have all disappeared except a very large defaced head with a singular style of elaborate coiffure. There is a short record, in characters of the first century B.C., by its side recording its execution by one Balaka, the pupil of Kanha (Kṛishṇa).

The *stūpa* inside the *chaitya-griha*, with a prominent drum having a railing at the top, is badly damaged.

Immediately to the left of the *chaitya-griha* at a higher level is a spacious monastery, extra-ordinary of its kind. Its regular plan and also the pillars in the hall are rather unusual in a monastery of this early age, the cave, to judge from the palaeography of the record on its façade, being not later than the first half of the first century B.C. It consists of a pillared verandah, a hall with fifteen pillars arranged on three sides of an oblong (front having none) and eighteen cells on three sides, each side having six. All the cells have rock-cut beds, two being double-bedded. Most of the cell-doors are crowned by projected *chaitya*-arches, connected with one another by a railing resting on a projected tie-beam with ends of rafters visible. The pillars, like those of the verandah, are square below and above and octagonal in the middle with chamferings at the transitions. The ceiling of the hall has a network of rock-cut beams and rafters.

The major portion of the floor of the verandah is now missing. Its right wall is relieved with a *chaitya*-window motif having a *stūpa* inside, below which is a projected architrave carved with a railing-pattern and supported by four pilasters. The ceiling is painted with floral patterns. The façade of the verandah is effectively carved with railed balconies, the upper crowned by a row of *chaitya*-windows. There are two short inscriptions on the façade.

Besides this magnificent monastery, there are five more ordinary *vihāras*, all, like the two main caves, belonging to a period when the image of Buddha was not evolved. These caves are badly shattered with front walls missing.



## F. KONDIVTE

Kondivte (lat. 19° 9' N.; long. 72° 53' E.; District Bombay Suburban) is 4 miles east of the Andheri railway-station and 8 miles south of Kanheri (p.164). The caves here number eighteen, arrayed in two groups—fifteen on the east and three on the west sides of the summit of a hill of no great height. Though not so splendid as the other groups noticed in this book, this small series is particularly remarkable for the plain but interesting *chaitya-griha* (Cave 9).

The plan of the *chaitya-griha* (photo 105), consisting of a long astylar hall with a circular sanctuary at the back end, bears, as already noted (p. 44), a striking similarity to that of the Sudāmā cave of the Barabar hills, but, unlike the latter, the entrance to the hall is in the front side, directly opposite the door of the sanctuary. The ceiling of the hall is flat, but that of the sanctuary is domical without any ribs. The hall, approached by a central flight of steps (now badly decayed); had originally a timber frontage; this is obvious from the chases, extending from one end of the side wall to the other, both in the floor near the landing of the flight and in the corresponding place of the ceiling. The semi-circular partition-wall between the sanctuary and the hall is pierced with a central oblong doorway flanked on either side by a trellis-window, the right one having above it a dedicatory inscription in characters of the second century A.D. The outer face of the overhanging eaves of the sanctuary is curved in imitation of a thatched hut with a domical roof.

The monolithic *stūpa* inside the sanctuary has a conspicuously high drum crowned by a three-barred railing with a basement and a coping.

On the right wall of the hall were added in fifth-sixth centuries A.D. several reliefs of Buddha, all the figures, with the exception of one, being seated. The largest composition depicts the Master in the preaching attitude, seated in *bhadrāsana* on a footed seat, the latter placed on a lotus, the stem of which is held by two *nāgas*. In this panel Buddha is attended by Padmapāṇi and another Bodhisattva (Vajrapāṇi?).

Among the monasteries, Cave 13—an work of about the sixth century A.D.—is the only one which has the typical plan of a fully-developed monastery. It consists of a verandah with carved pillars and pilasters, two each, a hall with four pillars arranged in a square (the only cave here with a pillared hall), eight cells, some with beds, on three sides of the hall and a shrine (with a vacant pedestal) in the centre of the back side. The verandah is approached by a flight of steps from a platform, the latter's plinth having a moulded façade. The pillars of the hall have moulded *khurā*-shaped bases, shafts, first octagonal, next sixteen-sided and then round with compressed necks having mouldings for rims capped by *āmalakas* and capitals in the form of inverted *khurā*-shaped basins, the last supporting the architraves.

The door-frame of the shrine of this monastery is decorated with the motif of a pillared pavilion, the latter's pillars relieving the two jambs and superstructure, with sloping eaves and a barrel-vaulted roof separated from the former by a *jālī*-pattern, decorating the lintel. The barrel-vaulted roof is relieved with a row of *chaitya*-windows, each having within the representation of a pillared pavilion within a railing. The outer



edge of the frame is relieved with a row of lotus-petals. Similar motifs decorating the frame are found in the doors of the hall of Cave 2, of the cell behind the hall of Cave 15 and of the shrine of Cave 17. In the right wall of the forecourt is cut a recess with a cistern below.

Cave 4 consists of a pillared benched verandah and a spacious benched astylar hall with a pillared corridor excavated in the side and back walls, each side corridor giving access to a set of three cells in a row. The hall is lighted by two windows between three doors. The right wall of the forecourt, near the recess with a cistern below, presents the relief of a hooded serpent.

Approached by a flight of steps from a moulded platform in front, Cave 2 presents a verandah and an astylar spacious oblong hall. The latter probably served as a sanctuary, as a rock-cut pedestal with the relief of a *stūpa* in its back wall would point out. The front face of the floor of the verandah is moulded, above which, edging the front side, are two parapets, one on each side of the entrance. Over each parapet, relieved with a four-barred railing having a base and coping, are two pillars and one pilaster with a *khurā*-shaped base, a square shaft with a neck of sixteen flutes having lotus-petals and a plain bracket supporting the architrave. The façade, projecting from the architrave, simulates a barrel-vaulted roof relieved with *chaitya*-windows at intervals.

There is nothing outstanding about the remaining caves, which are small excavations—often cells approached directly from a verandah and sometimes from a hall.

Besides these caves, there are scanty remains of structural *stūpas*, not only on the crest of the hill, but also on the terrace in front of the eastern group of cells. Further, there are several monolithic votive *stūpas*, all portable.

#### G. KANHERI

Kanheri (lat. 19° 12' N.; long. 72° 54' E.; District Bombay Suburban), the ancient Kṛishnagiri, nurses the largest number of rock-cut caves straggling on a single hill. The top of the hill affords a panoramic view of its picturesque setting with gorges on all sides, girdled by jungle-clad hills of riotous green; on the west beyond the Borivli railway-station and across the creek is the vast expanse of the Arabian Sea. Silhouetted against the western horizon beaming with the changing colours of the setting sun, the hill presents an inspiring picture of a rare scenic beauty. The establishment, with more than a hundred caves once accommodating a huge Buddhist settlement, had a long span of life beginning at least from about the first century A.D. and continuing at least as late as the eleventh century A.D. Its situation on the western sea-board and its accessibility to the thriving ports and commercial entrepôts like Sopara, Kalyan and Ghemula, the home of some of the donors, largely account for its prosperity.

That the centre attained a great celebrity in the Buddhist world is apparent from the representations of the Khadga-chaitya and the Pratyeka-Buddha-śikhara-chaitya of Kṛishnagiri in Koṅkana in the Cambridge University Library manuscript (no. Add. 1643) of A. D. 1015.

The caves overwhelm the visitors more by their number than by their architectural



qualities. The high aesthetic sense, displayed by the excavators of other important groups in balanced proportions, the skilful disposition of the surface and co-ordination between the architectural effect and sculptural embellishment, is lacking here, though delicacy is shown in the treatment of the reliefs of about the sixth century A.D., drawing amply on the classical tradition. None of the *vihāras* can compare in magnificence with those of Nasik, Ajanta, Aurangabad and Ellora. Evidently, the plannings of the caves were done by men of feeble calibre with a thin aesthetic vision.

Generally speaking, the caves are small and consist of a court with a recess in one of its side walls over a cistern, a raised pillared verandah approached from the court by a flight of steps with a moonstone at the base and a cell or an astylar hall with or without windows, the latter often grated in the earlier examples. The hall, in larger caves, has a few cells by its sides but rarely on three sides. Edging the pillars of the verandah is often a parapet relieved with a railing resting on beams and rafters; the façade of the plinth below is panelled with pilasters in reliefs. A characteristic feature of almost every cave is the existence of a cistern.

A few of these caves, like 41 (21 of Burgess), 67 (35 of Burgess), 89 (67 of Burgess) and 90 (66 of Burgess), have on their walls a dazzling profusion of reliefs, mostly of Buddha, of admirable poise and subtlety of modelling, with a dignified expression of transcendental bliss. Buddha is generally shown as either standing with his right hand in *vara-mudrā* or seated in *dharma-chakra-pravartana-mudrā*. In the latter class of his images, he is often shown with all his paraphernalia. Seated in *pralambapāda-āsana* with his feet resting on a lotus, he is flanked by two Bodhisattvas, the latter themselves, in larger compositions, in the company of female deities, probably their *śaktis*. The stem of the lotus is held by a pair of *nāgas*, sometimes accompanied by *nāgis*. This type of composition is very popular in the western Indian caves of the sixth-seventh centuries A.D.

In one of such compositions in Cave 90 we find Śakra, the god of gods, and the personified *vajra* on one side of the stalk below the foot-rest and the divine harpist Pañchaśikha in the company of a female, the latter playing on cymbals, on the other side. The insertion of these figures is, no doubt, inspired by the Buddhist tradition of Śakra's visit to Buddha, when the latter was in the Indraśāla cave near Rājagriha (p. 73). Śakra, in order to solve his doubts, came to the cave in the company of Pañchaśikha who announced his arrival by playing on the harp. The treatment of this relief (about sixth century A.D.) along with others of this cave bespeaks the consummate skill of the artist.

Very few of these reliefs have figures other than those of Buddha. Among these exceptions stands prominently Avalokiteśvara. In not less than three caves (Caves 2, 41 and 90), this compassionate Bodhisattva, who refused Buddhahood till the liberation of all beings, is depicted as delivering his votaries from Eight Great Perils—shipwreck, conflagration, wild elephant, lion, serpent, robber, captivity and demon. This theme occurs in the caves of Ajanta, Aurangabad, Ellora and Badami, but nowhere else the composition is so elaborate and the treatment so elegant as in Cave 90 of Kanheri. Avalokiteśvara is represented here in the company of two female deities, one of them being most probably Tārā (photo 106).



In Cave 41, of about the sixth century A.D., which consists of a court, a small portico in front of a pillared verandah, an astylar hall with a cell on either side, and a shrine with figures of Buddha on its walls, occurs a representation of the four-armed eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, the only known relief of this form in India. The cult of this particular form was fairly popular in China in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. and also in Chinese Turkestan, Cambodia and Japan. The Tibetan account of Bu-ston speaks of King Srong-Tsan-Gam-Po having brought in the seventh century the self-originated eleven-faced image of Avalokiteśvara from south India. The earliest iconographic description of this Bodhisattva is preserved in the Chinese translation (A.D. 561-77) of a Sanskrit *sūtra*, *Avalokiteśvara-ekādśamukha-dhāraṇī*, which lays down the prescriptions of a two-armed variety. According to it, the Bodhisattva is to hold in his left hand a *kuṇḍikā*, a water-pot, his right hand being in *abhaya-mudrā*. Exactly the same attributes are in two of the hands of the figure in Kanheri, while the third holds the stalk of a lotus. This cave and also many other caves bear traces of paintings. The theme of the paintings of this cave is the figure of Buddha.

One of the reliefs of Cave 67 depicts the *Dīpaṅkara Jātaka*, where Buddha, in one of his existences as a Bodhisattva, was born as a learned Brahmin, variantly named as Sumedha, Sumati and Megha. On hearing Dīpaṅkara Buddha's visit to Dipāvati, Bodhisattva felt an urge to worship him in person. Failing to get flowers anywhere, as they were all collected at the king's orders, he begged of a girl who had managed to hide seven flowers in her water-pot. On his insistence, the girl parted with five of them, but on the condition that he would take her as his wife in this and also in future births. With the flowers Sumedha hastened towards Dīpaṅkara but could not go near on account of a huge crowd. He threw the flowers towards him which remained fixed in the air around the head of Dīpaṅkara. The latter, perceiving his eager devotion, caused a rain-shower for the dispersal of the crowd. Sumedha took the opportunity and spread his long matted hair on the muddy road for Dīpaṅkara to tread over with his feet unsoiled by mud. Dīpaṅkara, perceiving his spiritual perfection, predicted about his future Buddhahood.

Though the caves continued to be in use at least till the eleventh century and though there are female divinities in the company of Bodhisattvas, full-fledged deities of the typical Vajrayāna pantheon like those of Ellora are absent here.

Excavated in the reign of Yajña Śātakarṇi, the *chaitya-griha* (Cave 3), with a high screened verandah, is an extremely clumsy and crude copy of that of Karla (pp. 154 ff.). Of fairly large dimensions, it has a court with a rock-cut fence in front, the latter pierced with an entrance, access to which is provided by a flight of steps. Like the verandah-parapet of Cave 3 (photo 109) of Nasik, the façade of this fence is exuberant with an ornamental railing pattern having a row of animals at the base, lotuses on the shafts and cross-bars and half lotuses alternating with human busts on the coping.

Like Karla (p. 155), it also has two columns, but edging the side walls of the court. Although executed in a slovenly manner, the right pillar has the distinction of having the earliest representation of Buddha among the western Indian caves, which, curiously enough, were reticent about the adoption of the image of Buddha even in the second century A.D. This figure and also the figures of Bodhisattvas and *nāgas* on this particular column are faintly reminiscent of the art-tradition of the School of Amaravati. Though



the excavators have accepted the image of Buddha, they did not carve him on the capitals of the pillars, which depict him symbolically.

The façade of the hall, which has three doors, lacks both the grace and grandeur of the earlier *chaitya-grihas*. Its only redeeming feature is the two groups of two couples (photo 107), each group carved in the oblong recesses between the doors. The *chaitya*-window is a graceless semicircular aperture, austere and devoid of ornamentation but having slits on its soffit for timber lattice-work. Occupying the entire space of the side walls of the verandah are two colossal reliefs of Buddha in *vara-mudrā* standing below a *makara-torana*—superimpositions of the fifth-sixth century A.D. To the same period belong the other figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas including a figure of Padmapāṇi bereft of ornaments but for a crown on the *jāṭā*.

The same lack of large aesthetic vision and balanced composition is evident in the interior as well. It is apsidal on plan with thirty-four pillars including four of the front row, of which two are irregular. Among the pillars, which are not well-proportioned, six on either row have *ghaṭa*-bases on stepped pedestals, octagonal shafts crowned by inverted *ghaṭas* with beaded bases, corbelled abaci and ornamental capitals relieved with motifs, like animal-riders, *abhisheka* of *stūpas* and footprints under the *Bodhi* tree, of tolerably good workmanship. Five of the pillars of the left row are similar to these but without bases, while the pillars at the back of the *stūpa* are plain octagons. The vaulted ceiling of the nave and the apse was originally supported by large arched wooden beams. The ceiling of the aisles on two sides is flat. The *stūpa* at the apse has a row of oblong sockets along the central belt of the drum which has a moulding above and a second band around the hemispherical dome.

There were large structural *stūpas* in front of this *chaitya-griha*. One of them, of stone, yielded two small copper urns, containing ashes, a small gold box with a piece of cloth, a silver box, a ruby, a pearl, pieces of gold and two copper-plates, one of them dated A.D. 324. In front of the cave, about 30 ft. away, lies a ruined brick structure with a moulded base. Two pieces of well-cut stones, each with a central aperture, bearing an inscription in characters of the fifth-sixth century A.D. were found here.

Near the *chaitya-griha* and guarding the way to the hill is the commencement of a large *chaitya-griha* (Cave 1). It was designed to have a double-storeyed verandah and a porch, besides the pillared hall, the last in the initial stage of excavation. The cave is not definitely earlier than the fifth-sixth century A.D. and may be even later, as may be seen from the design of the pillars of the verandah, which have the so-called compressed cushion or *amalaka* at the top.

Cave 11 (10 of Burgess), called Darbar cave, consists of a verandah with eight octagonal pillars, a small pillared chapel at the left end, a flat-roofed hall with a pillared aisles along the three sides, interrupted only in the centre of the back side which has a shrine, and cells, seven on the back and three on the left sides. On the floor of the hall, which has three doors and two windows, are two low benches as at Cave 5 of Ellora (pp. 182 ff.). The shrine has on its back and right walls each a high relief of preaching Buddha seated in *pralambapāda-āsana*. There are four inscriptions of varying dates, one dated Śaka 775 (A.D. 853) during the reign of the Rāshtrakūṭa king Amoghavarsha and



his feudatory, the Śilāhāra prince Kapardin, recording various gifts and funds for the purchase of books and repairs to damages.

Structural *stūpas*, four in number, of unbaked bricks, existed as late as 1853 on the floor of one of the cells of Cave 33 (13 of Fergusson and Burgess)—a group of caves converted into one with the fall of the walls. The excavations into the core of these *stūpas* led to the discovery of a large number of clay tablets inscribed with the Buddhist creed in characters of about the tenth century A.D.; many of them were found entombed inside small clay *stūpas*, as at Nālandā. Recent clearance in this cave led to the discovery of a large number of clay objects, including small votive *stūpas*, small plaques with reliefs of Buddha, Buddhist images and circular sealings of about the tenth century A.D.<sup>6</sup>

A small circular structure has recently been exposed in front of Cave 4.

Recent clearance in front of Cave 38 unearthed fifty-five brick *stūpas* of varying dimensions, arranged in three rows on a brick-paved floor, a ruined stone *stūpa* and a rock-cut flight of steps.<sup>7</sup>

In front of Cave 2 was found a stone casket containing an earthen pot with shell and carnelian beads, apart from decorative terracotta objects, coins, a copper lotus, loose bricks and pottery.

An interesting feature of this centre is its distinctive cemetery, isolately located on a secluded terrace. Here there are many small *stūpas*, mostly of brickwork and rarely of stone masonry, evidently erected on the charred remains of the distinguished monks, besides a few rock-cut *stūpas*. One of the stone *stūpas* is embellished with carvings, while some of the brick ones have mouldings of chamfered and curved bricks.

#### H. NASIK

The group of twenty-four caves, locally known as Pāṇḍu-leṇa or Pāṇḍava's caves, was cut in a long line on the north face of a hill, called Trirāśmi in early times, 5 miles from Nasik (lat. 19° 59' N.; long. 73° 47' E.), Nāsika or Nāsikya of yore situated on an important caravan-route. The chief interest of this group lies not only in its bearing on its walls a number of inscriptions of great historical significance belonging to the reign of the Sātavāhanas and Kshaharātas, a Śaka family temporarily eclipsing the fortunes of the Sātavāhanas, but also in its representing a brilliant phase in the rock-cut architecture of the second century A.D., to which period came up the majority of the caves. The establishment, however, sprouted forth much earlier, in about the first century B.C., and, no doubt, continued its existence at least till the sixth or seventh century A.D., when not only some of the earlier caves were altered, reconditioned and embellished with the figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, but a few new ones were added. Both the Sātavāhanas and the Kshaharātas were active patrons of this establishment, and the two largest monasteries were caused to be excavated by them. The remaining caves were the gifts of the common people, including monks and a writer, the latter—a Śaka—from Daśapura (modern Mandasor, Madhya Pradesh).

<sup>6</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1961-62—A Review*, p. 101 and pl. CXLVIII.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.



The *chaitya-griha* (photo 108), Cave 18, was not completed earlier than the first century A.D., though the excavation was undertaken as early as the first century B.C., as is evident from the inscription on the façade. The door-frame is embellished with the likeness of the façade of a *chaitya-griha* with a vaulted roof and its jambs, representing the pillars of the hall, with flowers alternating with honeysuckles and *jālī*. The decoration of the semi-circular space, above the entrance-door and below the horseshoe-shaped arch, in the form of a series of concentric ornamental bands connected by radial struts above a semi-circular trellis-pattern, in imitation of the woodwork inside the *chaitya*-window, is rather peculiar not only on account of the symbols of *śrīvatsa* over *tri-ratnas* in the centre but also due to the figures of animals in the compartmented spaces between the arches. Flanking the door, on both sides, were standing *dvāra-pālas*, the left one with a flower in right hand being preserved. The space around the *chaitya*-window, above the lower arch, is effectively relieved with *chaitya*-windows, railings, tie-beams with ends of rafters, pillars with octagonal shafts, bell-shaped members below the stepped abaci and addorsed animal-capitals, and *stūpas*—the assemblage representing pillared pavilions with vaulted roofs containing *stūpas*.

The interior of the *chaitya-griha* is severely plain except for the *ghaṭa*-bases on stepped pedestals in the case of the ten, out of fifteen, regular pillars with octagonal tapering shafts. The vaulted ceiling had originally a network of wooden beams and rafters. The *stūpa* has an exceptionally high drum crowned by a railing, and its *harmikā*, expanded in the form of an inverted stepped pyramid, rests on pillars enclosed by a double railing.

On either side of the *chaitya-griha* is a monastery (Caves 17 and 20), seemingly forming part of one unified scheme, as a staircase (preserved only in the case of Cave 20, the dexter one), giving access to each, begins near the entrance-door of the *chaitya-griha*, and one side of the railed parapet is carved obliquely against the façade of the *chaitya-griha*. As the relief of the railed parapet and the *dvāra-pāla* mentioned above are the gift of one individual, the initial excavation of Cave 20, which was first started by an ascetic but was completed after many years by the wife of a *mahā-senāpati* in the seventh regnal year of Sātavāhana King Yajña Śātakarṇi (circa A.D. 174-203), is contemporaneous with the completed *chaitya-griha*.

This monastery was enlarged inwards in the sixth or seventh century A.D., when not only the number of cells increased but also a shrine, with a colossal image of preaching Buddha in *bhadrāsana* attended by Padmapāṇi and Vajrapāṇi, fronted by a pillared antechamber was added. The pillars and pilasters, fashioned in the tradition of the date, of which the best expression is at Ajanta, are with long square bases, round shafts relieved with carved belts and *pūrṇa-ghaṭas* below the square abaci, over which rise the bracket-capitals. On either side of the door is the dominating figure of a Bodhisattva, the right one, Padmapāṇi, having a female by the side.

Not much later in date is Cave 17, a gift of a Hinduized *yavana* from Dattāmitrī, a town named possibly after the Indo-Greek prince Demetrius. The embellishment of the façade of the monastery with pillars and pilasters bears a striking resemblance to Cave 10 (p. 170). This cave also underwent additions in the later period when a relief



of Buddha was carved on the back wall of the hall to the right of the door of the back cell, which has a pillared portico in front.

Near Cave 20, but at a lower level, is Cave 19, one of the earliest monasteries, excavated in the reign of the Sātavāhana king Krishna (first century B. C.) by a monk from Nāsika. The design of this plain cave with its pillars is in an early tradition and is a departure from the common type in vogue here. It consists of a verandah with two pillars and pilasters and a bench at the left end, an astylar hall and six cells, two on each side of the hall, five being with beds. The pillars with a raised basement below and a plain architrave above are square below and above and octagonal in the middle with chamferings at corners and a half lotus on each of the four sides of the square near the junction. The hall is lighted by two *jālī*-windows, flanking the doorway. Over the cell-doors are *chaitya*-arches, connected by a railing, wavy at places.

Among the monasteries, Caves 3 and 10 have outshone others in size, planning and splendour and have elicited an acclamation on account of their happy combination of the architectural grandeur and sculptural embellishment. Cave 10, the earlier and also the simpler, is, however, the more elegant of the two. Its excavation is due to the Hinduized Śaka Ushabhadāta and his wife Dakshamitrā, daughter of King Nahapāna (circa A.D. 119-25) of the Kshaharāta family. Several of their inscriptions in bold characters, recording the pious donations not only to the Buddhist monks but also to the Brahmins, are recorded on the walls of the verandah and the left wall of the court. Ushabhadāta also made investments of three hundred *kārshāpāṇas* with the guilds of weavers at Govardhana for the *chivara* (monk's cloth) and the frugal diet of the twenty monks observing *varshā* in his cave. A later inscription on the right wall of the court records a perpetual endowment to provide medicine for the sick monks living in the monastery by a female lay devotee of the Śaka extraction in the reign of the Ābhīra king Išvarasena.

The monastery consists of a pillared verandah, approached by a central flight of steps, with a cell on either side (specifically mentioned as the gift of Dakshamitrā), and sixteen cells, each with a rock-cut bed, arranged on three sides of a spacious astylar hall. The last is lighted by two broad windows cut between three doors and has on its back wall, in the space between the doors of the two central cells, the relief of a *stūpa* (which later on was converted into a grotesque fierce-looking figure) flanked by a female.

The chief beauty of this cave, however, lies in its dignified façade, effectively composed and carved. The octagonal shafts of the pillars, four in number, (and also pilasters) issue from *ghaṭas* placed on stepped pedestals and are crowned by bell-shaped members, over which rest compressed *āmalakas* placed within oblong frames supporting inverted stepped (rather corbelled) abaci. The capitals above the last are two pairs of forcefully-drawn addorsed animals—bull, lion, sphinx, ram and composite figure—with riders, one pair facing the court and the other the verandah. In the space between the two pairs runs an architrave, from the top of which project eaves carved in the design of a hanging balcony, its floor resting on a series of rafters, the front ends of which pierce through a tie-beam. Above the last is carved a plain three-barred railing with a base and coping in imitation of the railing of a balcony.



A slightly later and more ornamental version of Cave 10 is Cave 3 (photo 109), the gift of Gautamī Balasri, the mother of the most powerful Sātavāhana king, Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi (circa A.D. 106-30), who extirpated the Kshaharāta family of Nahapāna. From the four records, two dated in the reign of Gautamīputra and two in the reign of Pulumāvi (circa A.D. 130-59), his son, carved on the back wall of the verandah, it is known that the excavation, which started in the reign of Gautamīputra, was completed in the nineteenth year of Pulumāvi who also granted a village to defray the cost of embellishing the cave with paintings. The cave was dedicated to the Bhadrāyāniya monks. Of the two inscriptions of Gautamīputra, one, dated in the year 18, records a grant of a field, previously under Ushabhadāta, to the monks of Triraśmi and the other a second field in place of the first which was not tilled.

With a fairly spacious courtyard overlooking the plains below and having an oblong rock-cut well at the left side, the monastery (fig. 6, p. 35) consists of a verandah with two cells, a spacious astylar hall with benches on three sides in front of the cells, which are eighteen in number and have rock-cut beds. In the centre of the back wall of the hall is the relief of a *stūpa* similar to the one in Cave 10.

A flight of steps provides access to the verandah, the floor of which, in imitation of a balcony, seemingly laid on beams and rafters resting on pillars, the main beams below the tie-beam being supported on the shoulder of *ganās*. Over the tie-beam is a parapet relieved with an ornate railing-pattern having lotus-medallions on cross-bars, a frieze of animals on the base and a series of half lotus-medallions with pendants in between on the coping. The pillars, six in number, in two groups, each group resting on a bench, the parapet of which forms a back-rest, are fashioned in the style of Cave 10; but bell-shaped members look more like inverted *ghaṭas*, the corbelled abaci on them in some cases being supported either by *ganās* or riders. The pilasters have half medallions near the base and top and a full in the centre, the space in between having three flutes. The façade of the eaves is relieved with a railing-pattern as in the parapet.

The frame of the central door is relieved with the representation of a *torana*, the shafts, relieved with *ganās*, amorous figures and *nāyikās* in compartments, forming the jambs and the two horizontal bands with volute ends, connected with each other by balusters and oblong panels as at Sanchi, forming the lintel. The rolled ends of the lower band, the latter relieved with a wavy garland having half lotuses in the upper loops and blue lotuses in the lower, are supported by bracket-figures of rampant lions. By the side of the jamb is a *dvāra-pāla*.

Among the caves with reliefs of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, Cave 23, consisting of irregular excavations of more than one unit, all now forming one complex with the fall of the partition-walls, contains the maximum number of such reliefs, including one depicting the *mahā-parinirvāṇa* and a number of female deities.

### I. PITALKHORA

Deep in utterly secluded scarp of a hill overlooking a narrow glen shines a remarkable series of caves with its picturesque wild setting and perfectly calm atmosphere.



The caves are rarely visited due to the difficulty of access. They are about 50 miles to the north-west of Aurangabad, the last seven miles to be negotiated by a bullock-cart from Bhamarwadi, a village on the Aurangabad-Chalisgaon road. The modern approach to them is from the top of the hill, but it is likely that the defile provided the access in the olden days.

Pitalkhora (lat. 20° 20' N.; long. 75° 00' E.; District Aurangabad) most probably represents the ancient Pitaṅgalya where resided *yaksha* Śaṅkarin according to the Buddhist text *Mahāmāyūrī*.

The main group, in the form of a rough crescent, starts near the head of the ravine and faces south, south-west and west. The part of the hill selected for excavation had, unfortunately, horizontal layers of soft rock embedded in the trap; these layers, on disintegration, proved fatal to the caves. Thus, the fronts of almost all the caves have disappeared, and in most instances the upper portions of the walls have crumbled too. The large number of fissures which admit rain-water into the caves freely existed even in the lifetime of the establishment. The residents tried to cope with the situation as ingeniously as conceivable. In order to keep the cells dry they diverted the water by boring holes, sometimes tunnel-like, in the rocky mass of the ceiling and by providing covered drains along the walls and floors, the entire work having been accomplished with such an aesthetic sense that it forms a lesson even to a modern conservator. In one instance, the rain-water percolating in the cave has been led outside in the form of a waterfall through the hoods of the relief of a serpent. At many places the decayed rocky surfaces were made good by dry masonry with fine joints.

The crowning glory of Pitalkhora is Caves 3 and 4, both conceived and executed on a magnificent scale, the exuberance and the rich texture of their façade-decoration unparalleled in the pre-Christian caves. Sharing a common forecourt facing the narrow stream in the bosom of the ravine, both are roughly contemporaneous. The façades of both now present a bare appearance, as they are bereft of the sculptured stones which have fallen with the disintegration of the rock, but an aroma of their original splendour can easily be smelt from the myriads of fallen stones bearing a variety of reliefs, the workmanship of which excels in many respects the reliefs of Bharhut. Indeed, the vigorous human figures with their beaming cheeks vibrate with a plasticity, amazing in such an early age.

Apsidal on plan, Cave 3, the *chaitya-griha*, consists of the usual nave and apse, demarcated from the aisles by an elongated U-shaped row of thirty-seven tapering octagonal pillars with inward rakes. As in Cave 10 of Ajanta, the half-arched ceilings of the aisles have quadrantal rock-cut beams, though the vaulted ceiling of the nave and the apse had originally a network of wooden beams and rafters, the chases and holes for which exist as usual. Except the extant drum, which is rock-cut and low like the one at Bhaja, the *stūpa* was a structural one. In this drum were cut several sockets, one in the centre and the others on the sides. Three of the latter produced crystal reliquaries and a ring, also of crystal. These interesting finds prove conclusively that all the rock-cut *stūpas* with sockets like these originally contained relics. Two of the pillars bear the dedicatory records of the natives of Pratishthāna, modern Paithan. These inscriptions may be assigned to dates between 150 and 50 B.C.



The façade has entirely vanished leaving only a scanty segment of the ribbed *chaitya*-window, with a smaller decorative one at a higher level. Evidently, it had a screen or front wall, either of masonry or of wood. The latter was pierced with a single door flanked on either side by a detachable *dvāra-pāla* similar to the ones in Cave 4, as the limbs of two such figures were discovered amidst the débris on the forecourt. Possibly the lintel of the door-frame was relieved with Gaja-Lakshmi. This cave is distinguished for its high stylobate, the approach to the door from the forecourt being by means of flights of steps, the lower flight wider and forming a narrow basement of the upper. The side faces of the upper flight are sculptured with two *yakshas* in the attitude of supporting superstructure and a prancing winged horse. The topmost step, giving access to the floor, has an oblong socket at either end, most probably for the insertion of the *dvāra-pālas* mentioned above. The façade of the plinth, which was lime-plastered, has a shallow projection and a horizontal moulding at the level of the top of the lower flight and is relieved with pilasters, one of the latter being of a separate stone.

That this cave was in occupation till about the seventh century A.D. is borne by the faded paintings, with a few painted records, on its pillars, walls and ceiling. The ceiling was painted with lotus-medallions, while the pillars and walls have mainly a cliché of stiff figures of Buddha, in some cases attended by Bodhisattvas, in the style of the late murals of Ajanta.

The conception of the lofty basement of the adjoining Cave 4, one of the grandest pre-Christian monasteries ever excavated, is even more novel, as its weight seemingly rests on the bodies of a row of large-sized elephants, facing, with their *mahauts* between their pillar-like stiff fore-legs and the trunks. The idea of the elephants, noted for their strength, supporting the base of an edifice continued later on in the side walls of the verandah of the *chaitya-griha* at Karla and in the plinth of the verandah of Cave 10 at Ellora and was carried out on an immense scale in two of the rock-cut Brahmanical temples at Ellora. The floor of the *vihāra* is approached by a covered flight, cut into the height of the plinth, leading from the forecourt. The entrance (photo 110) to the flight is guarded by two well-executed *dvāra-pālas* with a peculiar dress, a long spear and a shield. Over the lintel of the door-frame is Gaja-Lakshmi, while the jambs are relieved with an alternate succession of lotuses and honeysuckles.

The cave is now open in the front with the loss of the front wall. The upper part of the façade, one of the loftiest of its kind, is also badly weathered and damaged with the result that only traces of motifs like *chaitya*-windows can faintly be made out. But what the entire façade in its completed glory looked like can easily be visualized from the scores of stones, sculptured, in a style surprisingly mature for its age, with motifs like *mahābhiniṣṭhikramaṇa* (p. 2), *yakshas*, *yakshīs*, *dvāra-pālas*, *chāmara*-bearers, winged *kinnaras*, *amorous figures* including a foreign couple, animals, *stūpas*, façades of *chaitya-grihas*, railings, flowers and creepers, found in the débris collected on the forecourt.

The interior of the monastery also presents singular features. It has a central hall with traces of three rows of pillars and pilasters, supporting the rock-cut beams. The pillars have all crumbled away, the pilasters being square below and above and octagonal in the middle with the chamfering at corners. There are seven cells at the back of the



hall which has a few more, now badly shattered, on the right side. The surviving cells have each a high narrow door and often a mock window of the *jālī*-pattern. Over each set of the doors and windows is a ribbed horseshoe-shaped arch with a finial; below this are motifs imitating the lattice-work inside the arched window of a *chaitya-griha*, the interspaces between the semicircular bands and radial struts being filled with either animals or squattish *ganās*. The bottom ends of the arches rest on the shafts of the pilasters with capitals in the form of bell-shaped members, relieved with a variety of motifs, over which rest corbelled abaci supporting two couchant winged animals—elephant, deer, horse, bull, wolf and lion. At the extreme left of the back wall of the hall is a pair of sphinx-like figures, one being winged. Six of the cells, including one of the right row, have each a vaulted ceiling with rock-cut beams and rafters. These cells, with their façades, thus simulate the structural huts with vaulted roofs. The cells have beds, numbering even three. On the façade of the cells there are inscriptions, recording the gifts (evidently of the cells) by a royal physician with his family, while the pilaster in the left wall is the donation of a nun.

The remaining caves of this group (second century to first century B.C.), all monasteries, do not call for special remarks. Most of them have standard plans and only a few have cells at the back of the verandah. The cells, often with niches, have rock-cut beds, the façades of some of the latter being relieved with pilasters and two horizontal mouldings at the top. The ceilings above a few beds, in Caves 6 and 7, rest on a lintel with reliefs of stepped merlons, the lintel being supported by plain brackets. The projected architrave over the cell-doors of Cave 9 is relieved with a three-barred railing resting on rock-cut beams and rafters.

The second group, consisting of four caves, is nestled on the other side of the ravine, the first cave of this group being almost opposite the last cave of the first group. As one proceeds towards this group from the head of the ravine, one gets a panoramic view of the first group. Curiously enough, all the four caves of this group are associated with *stūpas*—three apsidal *chaitya-grihas* and one cell, with extensions at the back and left sides, containing three rock-cut *stūpas*, evidently made in memory of some distinguished resident-monks as at Bhaja. Among the *chaitya-grihas* (circa first-second century A.D.), the one, at a higher level than the remaining two, is an astylar hall. Its front wall is pierced by an oblong door, over the lintel of which is the ribbed *chaitya*-arch with a small oblong opening in the centre. The *stūpa* has a conspicuously high tapering drum crowned by a neat railing motif and a globular dome, its *harmikā* damaged.

The remaining two, sharing a common forecourt, are now stripped of the front walls. The eastern one is astylar with a ribbed *chaitya*-arch springing from the pilasters inside the hall. Its vaulted ceiling has rock-cut beams and rafters. The *harmikā* of the *stūpa* is particularly elaborate and depicts a *harmya*—an elliptical structure with a vaulted roof containing a couple—enclosed by a railing and supporting a corbelled abacus. Over the latter is depicted a railing, which enclosed the shaft of the *chhatra*. The western one has octagonal pillars going round the apse and the nave, which have rock-cut beams and rafters. The ceiling of the aisles, however, is a plain half arch.



## J. AJANTA

The caves near Ajanta (lat.  $20^{\circ} 32' N.$ ; long.  $75^{\circ} 45' E.$ ; District Aurangabad), containing the world-famous mural paintings (appropriately called picture-galleries in the inscriptions), occupy a unique position among the monuments of India by the superb symphony of architectural form, sculpture and painting. The impression created by the fine work of brushes and chisels and also by the amazingly wide aesthetic vision and largeness of conception of the master-designers is unforgettable. The setting of the caves is also idyllic. Cut in the crescent-shaped bend of a steep rock overlooking the head of a narrow glen, the caves are completely shut from the bustle of the mundane world. The glen itself is made lively and lovely by the little brook, Waghora, briskly descending into it in a waterfall of seven leaps. Though there are several rock-cut cisterns in the courtyard of some monasteries, the stream, presumably, formed the chief source of water to the establishment, which was connected with it by stairs.

The establishment, with its beginning in the second century B.C., continued its existence possibly till the ninth century A.D. when the Rāshtrakūṭas were the lords of the land.

The site is readily approachable from the Jalgaon railway-station, the distance being 34 miles.

The caves, including the unfinished ones, are thirty in number, of which five (Caves 9, 10, 19, 26 and 29) are *chaitya-grihas* and the rest monasteries. They fall into two distinct groups, the earlier, comprising two *chaitya-grihas* (Caves 10 and 9) and four monasteries (Caves 8, 12, 13 and 15A), dating from the second and first centuries B.C. The monasteries of this phase are small and consist of an astylar closed hall flanked on three sides by narrow cells, the latter, with rock-cut beds, serving as dormitories (fig. 4, p. 33). The invariable panoply of decorations, which are rare and limited only to the walls of the halls above the doorways, is *chaitya*-windows, railings and stepped pyramids (photo 45).

Cave 10, the earliest *chaitya-griha* here, was an work of the beginning of the second century B.C., as borne out by the palaeography of three short records, one incised by the side of the huge *chaitya*-window. Its front has almost disappeared. Apsidal on plan, the interior of the cave is divided into the usual nave, an apse and aisles by thirty-nine octagonal pillars supporting the entablature, from which springs the vault, originally braced with wooden beams and rafters in imitation of contemporaneous wooden buildings of this type. The half-arched ceilings of the aisles have, however, rock-cut beams and rafters. The drum of the *stūpa* at the apse is in two tiers.

The supreme importance of this cave lies in its preserving the early specimens of Indian paintings, as the painted inscriptions on the paintings themselves proclaim the latter as the works of the middle of the second century B.C. The costumes, coiffure and ornaments of the figures represented here resemble those of the pre-Christian reliefs of Sanchi, but the treatment here is more mature and free, surpassing in excellence the contemporaneous plastic art. The subject-matter of the paintings, which run in frieze-like horizontal bands, is religious, e.g. the ceremonial worship of the *Bodhi* tree by a royal personage



in the company of his retinue—soldiers, dancers, musicians and ladies—, a princely couple approaching towards a *chaitya-griha*, the *Chhaddanta Jātaka* and the *Sāma Jātaka*, where Sāma, a model of filial piety and the only support of his blind parents, was accidentally killed by the arrow of the king of Vārāṇasī but later was brought back to life through the grace of a goddess.

These early paintings lay beneath the superimpositions of the later paintings, the subject of which is mostly stereotyped figures of Buddha.

Cave 9, of the first century B.C., is rectangular on plan, but the layout of the colonnade is apsidal. The two central pillars of the front row depart from the others, which are plain octagons, by being square below and above and octagonal in the middle with chamferings at the junctions of the corners of the square. In contradistinction to the vaulted ceiling of the nave and apse which had the usual network of wooden beams and rafters, the ceiling of the aisles is flat. The façade, dominated by a *chaitya*-window of neat design, is well preserved. The door and the two windows, the latter lighting the aisles, have on either side pilasters, above which rests an architrave supported by plain brackets. Above the architrave is a row of five *chaitya*-windows in relief. On the façade are imposed in a later period figures of Buddha. This cave, too, contains two layers of paintings, the earlier going back to the period of the excavation.

In the centre of the apse stands a globular *stūpa*, on a high cylindrical base, crowned by a railing and a *harmikā*, the latter expanded above in the semblance of an inverted stepped pyramid.

After a stagnation of nearly four centuries, the excavation was revived on a more ambitious scale and it continued till the end of the sixth century. The most vigorous and prolific phase of this movement coincided with the second half of the fifth century and the first half of the sixth, during the supremacy of the Vākāṭakas, a dynasty matrimonially connected with the Guptas, the prime movers of the Indian classical tradition. Thus, Cave 16, one of the most beautiful monasteries of Ajanta, with its windows, doors, beautiful picture-galleries (*vīthi*), statues of celestial nymphs, ornamental pillars, stairs, a shrine (*chaitya-mandira*), a *mandapa* and a cistern, was the gift of Varāhadeva, a minister of King Harishena (circa A.D. 475-500). Cave 17, an equally magnificent monastery, was caused to be excavated by a feudatory prince of the same king.

During this second phase of excavation, after the initial stage of experiment, the general layout of the monasteries (fig. 7, p. 36) is standardized, though each one of them presents some individual features. Following the country-wide custom, a shrine with a colossal image of Buddha is introduced in the middle of the back wall, opposite the entrance-door, of the pillared hall. The latter, with a range of cells on three sides, is preceded by a pillared verandah. The shrine has in many caves an antechamber in the front. Sometimes there are subsidiary shrines in the back and side walls. Among the monasteries, Cave 6 alone is double-storeyed. The pillars of the verandahs and the halls are exquisitely carved with belts of traceries in the best tradition of the Gupta-Vākāṭaka age. The decoration of the door-frames is equally elegant and rich. The figures of Buddha and elementary Bodhisattvas, like Padmapāṇi, Vajrapāṇi and Avalokiteśvara as a saviour of mankind from Eight Great Perils (p. 165), and also



other figures, like Nāgarāja, yakshas, Pāñchika and Hārītī, are noted for restrained elegance, grace, serenity, dignified bearing and soft sensitive modelling. In spite of these classical qualities the figures of Buddha lack the spiritual luminosity of Sarnath.

Among the *chaitya-grihas* of this phase, Cave 29 is unfinished. The remaining two, 19 and 26, conservatively follow the earlier plan, but the ornamentation here is lavish and a figure of Buddha is introduced on the façade of the *stūpa* at the apse. The designs of the pillars and the embellishments are similar to those of the monasteries. Though the wooden technique and tradition still linger in motifs like the rock-cut beams and rafters, the caves are completely emancipated of the unnecessary timber-appendage.

Cave 19 (photo 111)—a grand combination of the decorative art and graceful proportions—is the finest specimen of the class in which a perfect balance is achieved of all the elements. The exquisite façade of this well-proportioned *chaitya-griha*, with its small but elegant pillared portico and projected ornate cornice, dominated by the *chaitya*-window flanked by corpulent *yaksha*-figures against a background of delicately-carved friezes, is magnificent in conception and execution. The interior is also equally beautiful. The pillars with fine belts of tracery are crowned by capitals, fourteen of which are brackets with a figure of Buddha in the centre and a variety of motifs, like animal-riders, flying couples, hermits and musicians, at the sides. The triforium over the pillars is carved with the figures of standing and seated Buddha in compartments, separated by panels of scroll-work interwoven with animal and human figures. The *stūpa* at the apse, with an elaborate and elongated drum and a globular dome, is relieved with a standing figure of Buddha under an arch, the latter springing from the mouths of *makaras* resting on pilasters. The crowning members consist of a *harmikā* and three diminishing umbrellas supported by figures and surmounted by a finial in the shape of a small *stūpa* with a miniature *harmikā* above. In front of the cave is a court flanked on either side by a chapel with two cells.

Slightly later in date is Cave 26 (photo 112), a work of about the beginning of the sixth century A.D. Larger than Cave 19, it has a pillared verandah with a pillared chamber at either end, leading to two cells on the right and one on the left. The general arrangement of the interior is similar to Cave 19, but the excessive ornamentation here, executed in meticulous details, has almost lapsed into florid ostentation. The artists were no longer satisfied with carving the façades, pillars and the triforium, the last having panels of Buddha and a single composition of Avalokiteśvara rescuing the devotees from perils. They, therefore, carved the walls of the aisles with the figure of Buddha. The monotony of the repetitions of these figures is relieved by two compositions, one representing the *parinirvāṇa* of Buddha and the other, a beautiful one (photo 6), depicting the assault and temptation of Māra on the eve of the Enlightenment. The *stūpa* at the apse has a prominent figure of Buddha, seated in *pralambapāda-āsana*, carved against the elongated and embellished drum of the *stūpa*. The court in the front with a front screen has on either side a complex of a subsidiary chapel with cells.

The second period of painting, too, started with the revival of the excavation-activity and continued for a period of three centuries or so. Almost all the caves, including the unfinished ones and early *chaitya-grihas* were painted in this period. The painter's art, like the chisel-work, reached its peak in the Vākātaka period. Substantial remains of this



quality brushwork have survived in Caves 1, 2, 16 and 17 (photo 12). Despite the disparity in the standards of workmanship due, no doubt, to varied authorship, these paintings maintain an exalted height by virtue of their rich colour-scheme, fine shading producing the effect of relief and plasticity, rhythmic and effective composition, superb expressiveness, highly developed figure-style, bold but delicate, artistic and idealized but not unnatural bodily features and women with delicately modelled bodies ever beautiful in all conceivable moods and poses without the least disturbance to the natural poise and balance. In fact, the paintings have stood the test of the highest art-standard of the mural paintings. The importance of these murals lies in their being the sole representative, except of course the scrappy fragments of Bagh (p. 99), of an Indian school which had once influenced deeply the art-tradition of the Buddhist world outside India, like Sigiriya (Ceylon) and Tung Huang (Central Asia).

The later paintings, sometimes palimpsests over the early paintings as in Caves 10 and 9, evince a considerable decline. The fire of creative vitality is extinguished. Caught in the foil of dull convention, the painter's art became effete without any pretension to artistic excellence and produced chiefly monotonous repetitions of somewhat rigid, mechanical and lifeless figures of Buddha, sometimes attended by Bodhisattvas. These stand in grim contrast to the earlier superbly-graceful painted figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas with their calm expression of transcendental bliss, spiritual illumination and dignified majesty.

The themes of the paintings on the walls are religious in tone and generally centre round Buddha, Mānushi-Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, episodes from the life of Gautama Buddha (photo 12) and the *Jātakas*. The last two topics, apart from offering visual representations of didactic themes to illustrate the teachings of the elder monks to their pupils congregated in the hall, afforded the painter an unlimited scope for depicting the whole gamut of human types with all kinds of human experiences from its lowest to the highest.

The paintings on the ceiling (photo 113), on the other hand, are remarkable for their rich decorative beauty and open up a vista of endless patterns woven with flowers, plants, fruits, birds, beasts, human and semi-divine beings, all permeated with a naturalness, freshness and grace and bearing the stamp of an unerring hand.

#### K. AURANGABAD

The caves, in three groups, are in a range of hills, 2 miles north of the town of Aurangabad (lat. 19° 52' N.; long. 75° 17' E.). In the first group there are five excavations (Caves 1-5). The second group, six furlongs to the east of the first, comprises four caves (Caves 6-9). A mile further east is the third group—a few plain unfinished cells—the religious affiliation of which is unknown.

The caves of the first and second groups, with the exception of the *chaitya-griha* (Cave 4), are not separated from one another by any long interval. Their architectural and sculptural features, combined with the introduction of female deities, suggest a date not much earlier than the sixth and not much later than the seventh century A.D. These caves are particularly interesting for the inspired orgy of the sculptural magnificence,



surpassing, in subtle grace and plastic treatment and effective display of varied coiffure, even the best of Ajanta. The soft and sensuous modelling and the dignified bearing of the large-sized female figures and Bodhisattvas, either as attendants to Buddha or in the role of door-keepers, endow them with a quality seldom found in the reliefs of the contemporaneous Buddhist caves. The caves were originally painted, patches of paintings still lingering at places.

The westernmost is an incomplete cave (Cave 1), of which the portico supported on four pillars and the long verandah with eight pillars and two pilasters were only finished. The richly-carved colonnade is after the typical ones of Ajanta. The topmost bracket-capitals are supported here by figures—mostly females under a flowering tree in a variety of poses and actions; one of these plays on a harp, one end of which is whimsically fashioned in the likeness of a human figure. The pilasters are also carved, as at Ajanta, with half and full medallions relieved with delicate carvings of enchanting beauty. In the same Ajanta tradition is embellished the door-frame with a female on a *makara* at the top corners and a *nāga*-couple at the base. The architrave above the lintel has a frieze of miniature temples, three with the crowning elements of the south Indian *vimāna* and two of the *khākhara* order. Each of these temples has a figure of Buddha in the central niche. The walls of the verandah present three panels depicting Buddha attended by *chāmara*-bearing Padmapāṇi and Vajrapāṇi.

Outside, beyond the left pilaster, is a relief of seven Buddhas all in preaching attitude, flanked by Padmapāṇi on the left and Vajrapāṇi on the right.

Cave 2 is a square sanctuary with a flat ceiling and a processional path around it, the front portion having a colonnade preceded by a porch. The plan, though quite common in the structural temples of this age, is unusual in rock-cut specimens. The pillars and pilasters are relieved with half and full medallions of ornate pattern. Specially remarkable is the façade of the sanctum with the two towering figures of Avalokiteśvara. In contrast with the sparsely but elegantly bejewelled left figure, the right one, with an *ajina* (antelope-skin) on its left shoulder and a *jaṭā-mukūṭa* on the head, is bereft of ornaments. Both carry the stalk (held near the base by a beautifully-executed *nāga*) of a lotus, on which is perched Dhyāni-Buddha Amitābha who is again on their *mukūṭa*.

Occupying the entire back wall of the shrine is the colossal image of Buddha, seated in *bhadrāsana* in preaching attitude on a *śiṃhāsana*. The walls of the sanctum, processional path and porch are relieved with many figures of Buddha in gestures of contemplation or preaching, sometimes attended by Vajrapāṇi and Padmapāṇi. The presence of a *stūpa* on the *jaṭā-mukūṭa* of Padmapāṇi in some cases in this cave and also in others proves that the iconography has not yet crystallized into rigid forms.

Cave 5, like Cave 2, is a sanctuary with a processional path around. The façade is now missing, but enough remains to show that there was a cell at either end. This cave, at a later date, was appropriated by the Jains who worshipped the image of Buddha as a Tirthaṅkara.

The grandest of the first group, however, is Cave 3 (photo 114). This monastery with its set plan and splendid embellishments compares well with the best productions of Ajanta. It consists of a pillared verandah with a chamber at each end, a pillared hall



with a central pillared portico and two cells at either side and a pillared porch leading to a shrine at the back. The twelve pillars of the hall, arranged in a square, are exquisitely embellished with figures within compartments or roundels, belts of tracery, etc. Below the abacus of the lavishly-carved bracket-capitals is either a foliated vase or an *āmalaka*-shaped member, often with a fluted splayed-out member above. The architraves above the pillars also bear carvings; the frieze on the front face depicts the *Sutasoma Jātaka*, painted versions of which occur in Caves 16 and 17 of Ajanta. In this *Jātaka* Bodhisattva born as Sutasoma, prince of the Kuru kingdom, cured Saudāsa, son of the king Sudāsa but born of a lioness, of his cannibal food-habit. The decoration of the door-frame and the moonstone (also the one leading to the hall) is splendid.

The interior of the sanctum presents a most spectacular tableau with two groups of devotees (kneeling on the floor near the side walls), some with folded hands in the gesture of *añjali* and others with floral offerings, fervently looking towards the saviour Buddha, seated in preaching attitude, attended by a bejewelled Bodhisattva on either side.

The date of the *chaitya-griha* (Cave 4) is difficult to be determined in the absence of the façade. The shape of the *stūpa* with a high cylindrical drum and a bulbous dome, however, indicates a date for it not earlier than the third century A.D. The plan of the interior is oblong, though the octagonal pillars (all modern restorations with the exception of fragments of two) are arranged in an elongated apse. The vaulted ceiling of the nave has a frame of rock-cut beams and rafters, while the ceiling of the aisles is flat and plain. The triforium is effectively decorated with a row of *chaitya*-arches above a continuous railing resting on a row of pilasters, corbels and plain lintels—the assemblage simulating the façades of the traditional *chaitya-grihas*.

Cave 6 has no hall; the pillared porch in front of the sanctum opens into a pillared verandah which has a cell at either end. On the three remaining sides of the porch and sanctum is a passage with three cells on either side and two small chapels with the figures of Buddha at the back. The pillars and pilasters of the porch are delicately carved with the usual full and half lotus-medallions, the narrow walls flanking the pilasters bearing the reliefs of a beautiful *śālabhañjikā* under a blossoming tree above and a pot-bellied *yaksha* below. The doors of the shrine and also the subsidiary chapels are flanked by standing Bodhisattvas. The treatment of the two, guarding the door of the shrine, is specially elaborate; they have female figures and attendants by their side. In the main sanctum is a congregation of kneeling devotees as in Cave 3, the left group comprising men only and the right group women.

The plan of Cave 7, the best in the second group, is slightly different from that of Cave 6 in that it has no porch attached to the main sanctum which has a passage or processional path on all sides. In place of the cells at either end of the verandah of Cave 6, it has pillared chapels, the right one having Pāñchika and his consort Hārītī. The left chapel has an interesting panel of six goddesses standing gracefully with a slight flexion (which differs in each case), preceded by Padmapāñi on the left and followed by Buddha on the right. The varied and elaborate treatments of the coiffures of these female figures in contradistinction to their sparse ornaments are particularly arresting. Each holds a bunch of flowers (mostly abraded). The central door leading to the passage has two



large panels of very bold execution, the left one presenting Avalokiteśvara in the role of the saviour of devotees threatened with Eight Great Perils of fire, robber, fetters, shipwreck, lion, snake, elephant and demon.

The sculptural embellishment of the walls of the sanctum with large figures of considerable beauty is the extraordinary of its kind. The two elaborate but balanced compositions with a central goddess (Tārā ?) attended by female figures, all delicately modelled, and dwarfs, which guard the entrance to the sanctum, bear the imprint of a master sculptor with an aesthetic sense of a very high order. In the back wall of the sanctum is the usual colossal figure of Buddha in preaching attitude. The side walls have, besides the three seated figures of Buddha, two interesting panels, the one on the right showing most probably Lokeśvara and Tārā, both standing. Audaciously superb, however, is the composition of a beautiful danseuse in the middle of six seated musicians (photo 115), depicted on the left wall of the sanctum.

Cave 9 has three sanctuary-complexes opening from the back side of a long verandah. Among the large assemblage of figures of Buddha, Bodhisattvas and female divinities on its walls two are specially remarkable. One, on the left wall of the verandah, is Buddha lying in state (*mahā-parinirvāṇa*) as in Cave 26 of Ajanta. The other is Avalokiteśvara, devoid of ornaments, with four hands, carrying in his lower left hand the stalk of a lotus and upper right a rosary, the lower right being in *vara-mudrā*.

#### L. ELLORA

Famous for its caves in three groups, Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina, the hill, known after the neighbouring village of Verule or Ellora (lat. 20° 1' N.; long. 75° 10' E.; District Aurangabad), is about 16 miles to the north-west of Aurangabad. Extending over a mile and a quarter in a line on the west face of the hill, the caves run from the south to the north. The southernmost group, comprising twelve Buddhist caves, sprang up mostly in the reign of Early Western Chālukyas (sixth century to the eighth century A.D.) and partly in the early part of the reign of their supplanter, the Rāshtrakūṭas.

The chief interest of this group, the last bright flame of the Buddhist rock-cut architecture, lies in its having certain original forms excavated on a gigantic scale, not found elsewhere. The excavators in their frenzied zeal for innovations and new forms threw aside all the restraints of the classical idiom and produced spectacular caves. But the wide aesthetic vision exhibited by the excavators and sculptors of Ajanta in the well-balanced arrangement of different parts and in the perfect symphony of art and architecture, each illuminating the other, thins down here. Most of the caves were originally painted, but now little but faint traces of paintings exist. These, however, fell far short of the standard of Ajanta.

The exuberance of sculptured figures, which was rampant in the caves of Aurangabad, was carried further in unrestrained abundance in these caves. As at Aurangabad, the doors of the shrine-chambers are always flanked by towering Bodhisattvas, often in the company of other figures, including female divinities. Not only do these Bodhisattvas figure independently on the walls of the caves, but others, including goddesses of the



Vajrayāna pantheon, feature frequently in their independent status. Thus, the figure of Mahāmāyūrī, the Tantric goddess of the *Pañcharakṣhā-maṇḍala*, occurs not less than five times. For the first time in one of these caves we find the function of Avalokiteśvara, as the saviour of the Eight Great Perils (p. 165), relegated to Tārā. In view of the extreme paucity of the figures of the later Buddhist pantheon in the rock-cut caves, the importance of these reliefs in the field of iconography is undoubtedly great.

In the earlier shrines Buddha is invariably depicted in the company of two Bodhisattvas besides the flying *vidyādhara*s, but in the later caves several other Bodhisattvas are introduced. Indeed, the shrine-chambers are replete with the figures of these Bodhisattvas and smaller figures of Buddha. The principal image of Buddha is in a colossal scale and is generally represented in *dharma-chakra-pravartana-mudrā* in *pralambapāda-āsana* as in Caves 2-6 and 8-10, but figures of Buddha in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* and *dhyāna-mudrā* occur in Caves 11 and 12.

Beginning from the extreme south, Cave 1 is an austere plain monastery with a pillared portico having cells at the ends, a benched hall and eight cells, four each on the back and south sides.

The individualistic treatment of Cave 2 is noteworthy. It consists of a verandah with a recess at either side containing the Buddhist counterpart of Kubera in the north and Hārītī (?) in the right besides figures of Buddha, a pillared hall with lateral galleries along each side, each with a row of large figures of preaching Buddha in *pralambapāda-āsana* in the company of the attending Bodhisattvas, and a shrine, having the image of Buddha with the usual paraphernalia at the back, flanked on either side by a porch, leading to a rear cell. The right porch has a relief of the Great Miracle of Śrāvastī (p. 5).

The pillars, arranged in a square, have each a high square base, a shaft, first octagonal and next fluted, capped by a succession of three gradually-increasing and truncated tulip-like splayed-out members, and an *āmalaka*-shaped (the so-called cushioned) capital supporting a plain bracket, above which is the architrave resting below the flat ceiling. The pillars of the lateral galleries have a vase-and-foilage (*pūrṇa-kumbha*) capital. Pillars of both these orders are the common types in use here.

The doors of both the hall and the shrine are guarded by large figures of Bodhisattvas. On the front wall of the hall is a profusion of the reliefs of Buddha and other divinities of the pantheon.

Cave 3 has the full-fledged monastic plan with the usual image of Buddha in the shrine. The pillars have vase-and-foilage capitals.

Cave 4 is a plain astylar hall with a pillared aisle at the back leading to a central shrine and two cells at the further end. A door from the right wall of the hall opens into a subsidiary chapel. The left wall was designed to have cells, which plan, however, did not materialize.

Of singular interest is Cave 5 (fig. 19) at a higher level. It consists of an exceptionally-spacious oblong hall divided into a central nave and aisles on all sides by pillars arranged in an oblong. The pillars and pilasters of the back row and the extant pilaster of the front have neckings with a delicately-carved full medallion below and three-quarters of a second medallion above. The remaining pillars resemble those of the hall of Cave 2.



The front aisle has at the right end a ruined subsidiary complex including a verandah, a central shrine with a processional path around and cells on the sides of the latter, and at the left end a cell. The rear aisle presents a shrine of Buddha at its back and two cells on sides. The aisles on two sides have cells besides a central pillared lobby opening into further cells. The left side aisle has in addition a small chapel with a pillared ante-chamber. What, however, distinguishes it from other caves is the existence, in the nave,

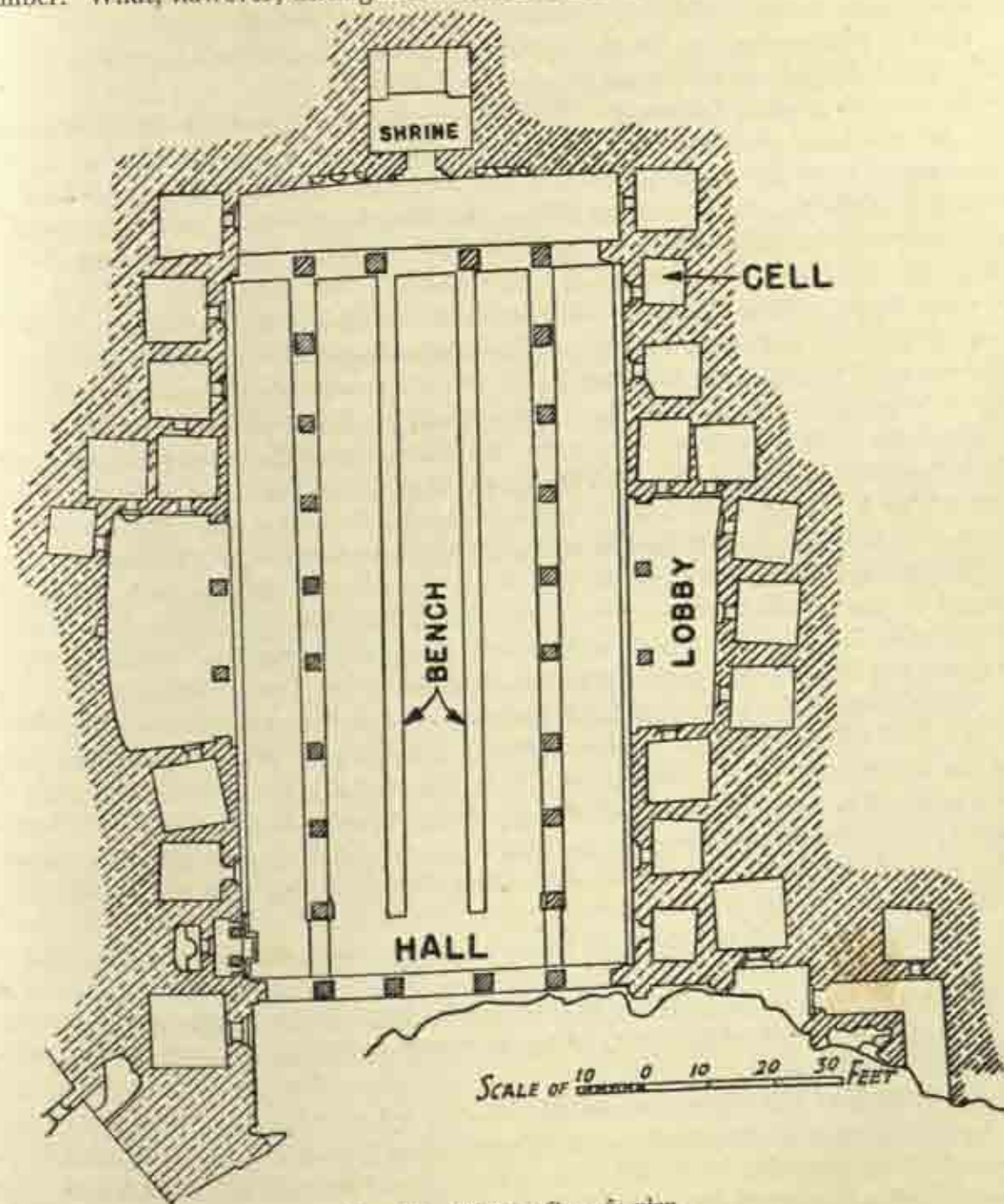


FIG. 19. Ellora : Cave 5, plan



of two low narrow benches, a peculiar feature shared alone by the Darbar cave at Kanheri (p. 167). Most probably these served as the study-desks.

Cave 6, again, presents an individual feature: its oblong astylar hall has on either side a second hall with two pillars and pilasters each at the front and cells on two of their sides; at the back of the central hall is a pillared antechamber leading to a small shrine at the far end. The walls of this antechamber are particularly rich in the sculptures of the Bodhisattvas and goddesses, including a figure of Mahāmāyūrī.

Cave 7 is an unfinished monastery with a spacious hall with four pillars set in a square and cells, unfinished, on the sides.

The shrine of Cave 8, instead of being recessed at the far end, has been brought forward and provided with a processional path all around as in a few caves at Aurangabad, this passage having three cells on the left, a pillared unfinished gallery at the back and two pillars in the front demarcating it from the front hall; the last also has two pillars and pilasters on the front and three cells on the left. In front of this hall is a smaller hall with a pillared chapel and a cell, open in the front.

Cave 9, approached through the hall of Cave 6 and a four-pillared tiny hall, consists of an open terrace with a parapet in the front and a chapel with two pillars and pilasters in the front. The highly-embellished façade above has among other motifs and figures a relief of Tārā as a saviour from Eight Great Perils (p. 165).

Cave 10 (*circa* seventh century A.D.), the last noteworthy attempt of the *chaitya-griha* in live rock, is locally known as Viśvakarmā after the architect god. The plan (fig. 17, p. 51) of this is as elaborate as its treatment singular in many respects. The outward appearance, however, is so altered that it is difficult to recognise in it the original form.

A doorway, pierced through the front wall, gives access to an open courtyard surrounded on the remaining three sides by a raised pillared verandah, the latter's plinth relieved with foreparts of animals at intervals seemingly supporting the floor. Beyond the side verandah are cells arranged in three storeys.

The pillars of the verandah have high square bases, stunted shafts, often fluted, and vase-and-foilage capitals with plain oblong brackets supporting the beam, from which projects the architrave. The latter has a long frieze of a hunting scene carved in the recess between two sets of mouldings; the upper set is capped by a parapet bordering the edge of an upper gallery, formed by the roof of the verandah. The façade of the parapet has a row of oblong framed niches, containing alternately an amorous couple and a scroll-work.

The main verandah was designed to have a pillared antechamber with a subsidiary chapel at either end. The left flank is not finished. The walls of the antechamber of the right flank are covered with reliefs of Buddha and Buddhist divinities like Mañjuśrī, Lokēśvara, Ārya-Sarasvatī, Mahāmāyūrī, Maitreya, Tārā and Bhṛikuṭī, while in the chapel is a figure of Lokēśvara.

At the back of this verandah is the *chaitya-griha* (photo 53) proper, with three doors, and two flanking cells. Approach to the upper gallery is provided by a flight cut in the side wall of the verandah of the left wing. The façade of the wall behind this gallery has a trefoil arch—a radical transformation of the familiar horseshoe-shaped arch which



lent a distinctive character to the front of the *chaitya-grihas*. The upper foil of this arch contains a small circular aperture, a substitute of the earlier large *chaitya*-window, while other foils form the border of an architrave. Below the latter are three oblong doorways, the central one being comparatively spacious. The trefoil arch is crowned by a *kirtimukha*, below which at either side of the central foil is a flying *vidyādhara* in the company of two females with supple elongated legs.

On the same façade, but towards the ends, are two elaborate niches, each with a Bodhisattva in the company of two females. The roofs of these niches are vaulted as in the *khākhara* temples. The façades of these roofs are decorated with ornamental *chaitya*-window motifs, the right one being distinguished by a pair of *bhūmi-āmalakas* crowning a set of *bhūmi-barandis* immediately below the topmost vault.

Above the trefoil arch is a projected member, its bottom seemingly resting on rock-cut rafters, the latter's end piercing through a front tie-beam. The façade of this member has a charming frieze of a row of couples with dwarf attendants, each group within a *makara*-arch springing from pilasters.

The doors below the trefoil arch lead to an inner gallery with a parapet perched on the roof of the inner front aisle, the latter's ceiling being arched. The inner face of the parapet is divided into compartments, having either amorous couples or *nāyikās* in a variety of poses. The left wall of the outer gallery contains a number of Buddhist figures and the Buddhist creed (p. 4) inscribed in characters of about the tenth century A.D.

The spacious hall, apsidal on plan, has thirty pillars arranged in an elongated apse. With the exception of the central two of the front row, which have high square bases, octagonal shafts, vase-and-foliage members with mouldings and foliated capitals, the pillars, with bracket-capitals, are octagonal, except for a narrow fluted necking, the latter having unfinished medallions immediately below and above it.

The projected triforium above the lintel over the pillars has at the base a frieze of dwarfish *ganās* in all poses, some dancing in ecstasy. Over this, except on the front side, are, in separate framed compartments, preaching figures of Buddha attended by Bodhisattvas; beyond them again is often a standing figure of Buddha on either side. From the top of these compartments spring the rock-cut curved beams seemingly supporting the vaulted ceiling and meeting a central ridge-piece, also rock-cut. The beams have at their bases alternately a multi-hooded *nāga*, mostly with folded hands, and a single-hooded *nāgi* with garlands or flowers. Over the *ganās* on the front triforium are three panels: the central panel probably depicts a procession of a distinguished personage with his retinue of armed attendants and members of the seraglio; the side ones contain amorous scenes.

The object of worship is a seated image of preaching Buddha in the company of two Bodhisattvas, all carved against a *stūpa*, which serves only as an ornamental background. The form of the *stūpa* also evinces a great transformation: its tall tower-like drum dominates the entire scheme and has a central frieze with figures of Buddha in compartments; the dome is a low compressed orange-shaped member crowned by a *harmikā* with several *ratha*-like projections expanded above in a stepped manner.

The remaining two caves—the latest Buddhist excavations at Ellora—are unique



in conception and remarkable for their originality of composition. Both consist of a three-storeyed edifice with a spacious forecourt approached through a passage cut into the front wall. The sober simplicity and balanced composition of the spectacular façade, fashioned on a massive scale, lend them a distinctive character. Both convey the idea of a real three-storeyed structure, each storey having a pillared verandah. The interior arrangement, however, varies in two caves; no two floors are also alike.

Cave 11 is locally known as Do Thal (two-storeyed), as its ground floor was buried for a long time. The ground-floor has two cells and a central sanctuary with an image of Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā* at the back of the verandah.

A flight of steps at the north end of the verandah ascends to the verandah of the first floor, which consists of a row of five excavations, of which the first is only commenced and the last (at the southern end) is a cell with a rock-cut bed and a niche. The second is a sanctuary with a colossal image of Buddha in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* attended by Vajrapāṇi and Padmapāṇi carved against the side walls which have six other figures of divine Bodhisattvas with their characteristic attributes. In front of the throne are two females; the left one emerging from the floor is with a *ghaṭa*, while the right one (Prithivī?) strides over a prostrate male (Māra?).

The third is also a sanctuary, but preceded by a hall with two central pillars and two windows. In the sanctuary is an image of Buddha in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* in the company of two Bodhisattvas.

The fourth excavation is again a sanctuary with an arrangement similar to that of the second.

At the south end of the verandah is also a chapel of Buddha.

In the central portion of the back wall of the verandah of the third storey is recessed a pillared porch leading to a long hall with a central row of pillars. Access to the hall is also provided by two side doors opening from near the ends of the verandah itself.

In the middle of the back wall of the hall and opposite the front porch is a pillared antechamber leading to a shrine with a preaching image of Buddha in the company of two Bodhisattvas. Facing the left side door is a second sanctuary with an image of Buddha at the back of the hall.

The walls of the hall are relieved with scores of Buddhist figures.

This cave, later on, was appropriated by the Brahmanical votaries, as borne out by the figures of Mahishāsūramardīnī and Gaṇeśa carved on the wall of the hall.

The ground-floor of Cave 12, called Tin Thal, consists of a long hall, without a front wall and with three rows of pillars, cells, some with stone beds, on three sides of the hall, a pillared antechamber recessed in the central portion of the back wall of the hall and a shrine at the back of the antechamber. The shrine contains, as usual, a colossal image of Buddha. The divine Bodhisattvas, eight in number, are carved on the side walls. The style of these sculptures with their elongated faces is different from that of the figures in Caves 2 to 9.

A flight from the south-west corner of the hall leads to the first floor which has a pillared porch leading to a hall, also pillared and having two more side entrances from the verandah. Around the hall are cells and an antechamber opening into a shrine at the back.



Inside the last are the usual image of Buddha with all the paraphernalia and divine Bodhisattvas carved on the side walls.

Most remarkable, however, is the commodious second floor (fig. 20) consisting of a hall, in continuation of the verandah, with four rows of eight pillars and two pilasters, parallel to the pillars of the verandah, an antechamber with pillars and pilasters leading to a shrine at the back. On the side walls of the last are ten divine Bodhisattvas with their characteristic attributes.

The antechamber and the hall may be termed as a sculpture-gallery. In the side and back walls of the former are boldly marshalled twelve goddesses, originally painted, all seated in *lalitāsana* on a double-petalled lotus, the stem of which is held by *nāgas*. Over

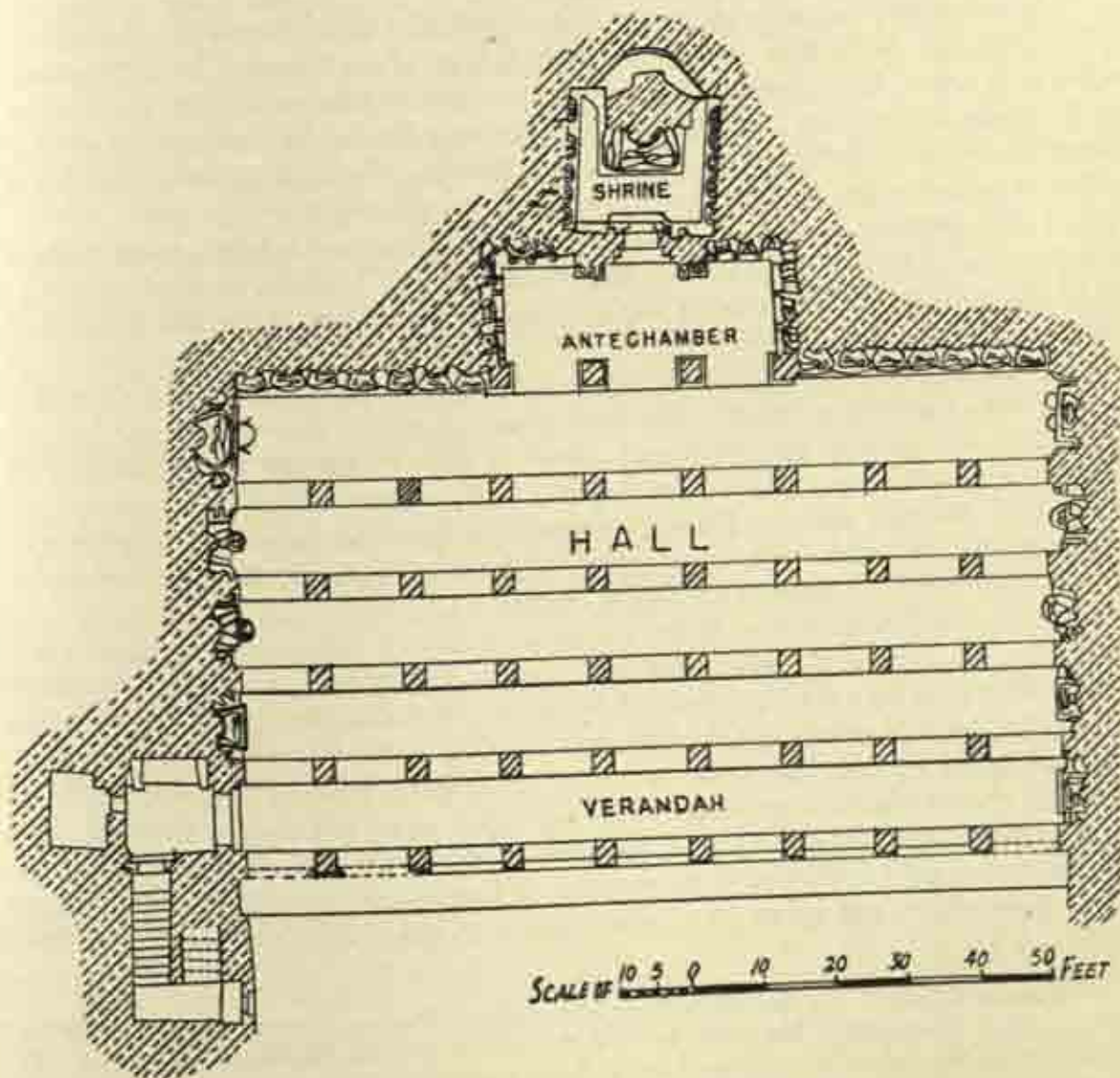


FIG. 20. Ellora : Cave 12, second floor, plan



them are figures of Buddha. The two flanks of the back wall of the hall bear each a row of large-sized seated figures of Buddha, the left group in *dhyāna-mudrā* (photo 116) and the right group in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*. The strips of the side walls between the pilasters have also each a figure of Buddha with the usual attendants.

### M. SOPARA

Sopara (lat. 19° 25' N.; long. 72° 47' E.; District Thana), approachable from Nala-Sopara on the Western Railway, represents the ancient emporium of Śūrpāraka in Aparānta (northern Konkan). According to the *Pūrṇa Avadāna*, Pūrṇa, a merchant of Śūrpāraka, following his conversion, built here a sandal-wood monastery which is said to have been miraculously visited by Buddha.

The importance of this place even in the days of Aśoka is proved by the discovery of fragments of the Eighth and Ninth Rock-Edicts of the Emperor here. The endowments of a few of the natives of this place are recorded in the dedicatory inscriptions of the Sātavāhana period on the Buddhist monuments at Karla and Kanheri. Of particular interest among these is the gift of the preacher Sātimita (Svātimitra) which consists of a pillar containing relics (*sasariro thabho*) in the *chaitya-griha* at Karla (p. 156).

In an impressive mound within an oblong brick enclosure, locally known as Buruda Rājācha Kota (Buruda Rājā's fort), Bhagvanlal Indraji partially opened, as early as 1882,<sup>8</sup> the remains of a large brick *stūpa* with a circular drum, about 268 ft. in circumference, below the ruined dome.

This *stūpa* is better known for its remarkably rich deposits<sup>9</sup> enshrined right in the centre inside a square regularly-built brick chamber with a pyramidal top, beginning 1 ft. below the base of the dome and about 12 ft. from the top of the mound. This chamber appeared like a hollow brick pillar, 3 ft. square. Within the chamber was discovered a circular stone coffer kept in position by eight large bricks below a 2-ft. deposit of soft clay and above 4-in. deposit of the same material. Below the latter there were layers of bricks in mud to a depth of nearly 13 ft.

The circular stone coffer, when opened, disclosed in the centre a copper casket, containing, one within the other, four other caskets, of silver, of stone (?), of crystal and of gold. The last with a design of interlocking spirals, curiously enough, contained, besides ten gold flowers, a piece of green glass and a spark of diamond, thirteen bits of earthenware which are generally believed to be pieces of the begging-bowl of Buddha. Inside the silver and crystal caskets were respectively eighty-six and nineteen gold flowers.

The maximum deposit, however, was in the copper casket and comprised two hundred and ninety-five gold flowers of seven varieties, a piece of silver wire, thirteen pieces of semiprecious stones and green glass, a little patch of gold leaf, thirty-one stone beads,

<sup>8</sup> Bhagvanlal Indraji, 'Antiquarian Remains at Sopārā and Padārā', *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XV (1881-1882), pp. 292-315; K. N. Dikshit, 'Buddhist Relics from Sopara re-examined', *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society*, I, no. 4, 1939, pp. 1-5.

<sup>9</sup> These are now preserved in the collection of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.



seven gold beads, a small gold plaque pressed with the seated figure of preaching Buddha and an unworn silver coin of the Sātavāhana king Gautamīputra Yajña Śātakarṇi (circa A.D. 174-203). Around the copper casket were found arranged in a circle eight beautiful bronze images. They represent the seven Mānushi-Buddhas—Vipaśyin in *vyākhyāna-mudrā*, Śikhin in *dhyāna-mudrā*, Viśvabhū in *vara-mudrā*, Krakuchchanda in *dhyāna-mudrā*, Kanakamuni in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*, Kāśyapa in *abhaya-mudrā* and Śākyamuni in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*—all seated against their elongated halo, semicircular at the top, below their distinctive *Bodhi* trees and bejewelled Maitreya, the future Buddha, seated in *lalitāsana* with his right palm in *vara-mudrā* and the left holding a branch of *nāgapushpakas*, against a horseshoe-shaped aureole. It is presumed that the coin belonged to the period of the original construction, while the bronzes and the gold plaque with the figure of Buddha and possibly the copper casket were deposited in about the eighth-ninth century A.D., when the *stūpa* probably underwent repairs or reconstruction.



## 9. TAMIL NADU, KERALA AND MYSORE

Buddhism got a footing in the south during the reign of Aśoka. Versions of his Minor Rock-Edicts exist at Maski, Gavimath near Kopbal and Palkigundu near Gavimath, all in District Raichur (Mysore), and at Brahmagiri, Jatingi-Ramesvara and Siddapur in District Chitaldrug (Mysore). Two special missions (p. 10) are said to have been commissioned to Mahishamandala (probably Mysore) and Vanavāsa (Banavasi, District North Kannada, Mysore). Hiuen Tsang also saw a number of Aśokan *stūpas* in Draviḍa (Tamil) country and in the vicinity of the capitals of Chu-li-ya and Mo-lo-kū-t'a, the latter place having a monastery believed to have been built by Mahendra who converted Ceylon.

The brick *chaitya-griha* at Brahmagiri, a furlong to the south-east of the boulder containing the Minor Rock-Edict of Aśoka, is unfortunately reduced to its last stage. The date of this apsidal structure has not been determined, though the size of the bricks (1 ft. 5 in. × 9 in. × 3 in. to 3½ in.) indicates a fairly early date.

By the first century B.C. a flourishing Buddhist centre was established at Sannathi<sup>1</sup> (Taluk Chitapur, District Gulbarga, Mysore) on the bank of the Bhima. The site is greatly denuded, the stone slabs of the Buddhist edifices having been utilized in Brahmanical temples, steps of the bathing *ghats* and secular buildings. Rifled by the villagers, an impressive *stūpa*, possibly the Main *Stūpa* of the centre, is now reduced to its plinth. The finds of a large number of limestone slabs, several with fine reliefs in the style of the Sātavāhana regime and some with donative records, however, prove that the establishment was in a highly affluent state from the first century B.C. to at least the third century A.D. The themes of the reliefs are varied. While some of the sculptured slabs show typically Buddhist subjects like footprints in front of a vacant throne placed below the *Bodhi* tree (photo 118), others, including pillars, depict mundane scenes like men and women in an atmosphere of luxury (photo 117). From the dedicatory inscriptions, it is evident that lay devotees from different walks of life (*rājāmacha*, *gahapati*, *vāṇiyaka*, etc.) contributed greatly to the enrichment of the Buddhist edifices there.

Monks of Vanavāsi attended Duṭthagāmaṇi's consecration of the Mahāthūpa in Ceylon in the first century B.C.

One of the inscriptions of the third century A.D. from Nagarjunakonda speaks of the Ceylonese monks preaching in Damila (Tamil) and Vanavāsi. A queen of the latter kingdom, who was a sister of the Ikshvāku king Ehuṇula Chāntamūla, erected a *stūpa* and a monastery at Nagarjunakonda (pp. 206 f.).

A glowing picture of the flourishing condition of the monasteries of Kaveripattinam (District Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu) and Kanchipuram (p. 193) is presented in the Tamil works like the *Maṇimekalai* and the *Silappadikaram*. The *Rājavāhini* refers to a Chola king's gift of a temple at Kaveripattinam, originally designed for Śiva, to the service of Buddha.

<sup>1</sup> 6 miles from the Nalwar railway-station (on the Bombay-Madras line). *Indian Archaeology 1967-68—A Review* (New Delhi, 1968), p. 37, paragraph 5, where the name of the site is not mentioned.



Buddhadatta, a Buddhist writer of the fifth century A.D. and a contemporary of the great Pāli commentator Buddhaghosha, is said to have resided in a *vihāra* of this place when he wrote some of his works.

The literary evidence regarding Kaveripattinam is partly confirmed by a recent small-scale excavation at Kaveripattinam revealing the remains of a brick monastery.<sup>2</sup> Built in the fourth or fifth century A.D., the monastery underwent reconstructions at a later date. Only one wing—a row of cells fronted by a long common verandah—of this monastery and the northern flank of a compound-wall have so far been laid bare. The walls were originally embellished with moulded bricks and stucco ornamentation. The unearthed antiquities include a bronze figure of Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*, a limestone slab with the representation of the footprints of Buddha and auspicious symbols and terracotta and stucco figures.

Buddhadatta also stayed at Urugapura (modern Uraiyur; District Tiruchchirappalli, Tamil Nadu), Butamangalam (probably Budalur, District Thanjavur) and Kanchipuram. The last place was visited by Buddhaghosha who also passed some time at Madura and Mayurasattapattana (generally identified with Mylapore near Madras). In a Pallava inscription on the Ādivarāha-Perumāḷ temple at Mahabalipuram (District Chingleput, Tamil Nadu) Buddha has been regarded as the ninth incarnation of Vishṇu.

Unlike in the north, Buddhism did not have a very smooth sailing in all sites in the south. Though there is no substantial proof about the organized persecution of the Buddhists and, in fact, there are cases where individual kings made donations and endowments in favour of Buddhist establishments, evidence is not lacking in the bitter attack and the slander on the faith by the Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and Jaina leaders. Religious intolerance and rivalry were sometimes quite acute in the south. Thus, the Buddhists had to maintain their hold against the formidable opposition of the votaries of Jainism and Brahmanism, the latter faith gaining an upper hand since the rule of the Pallavas. Sometimes the kings also were taking part in such factions. The *Mattavilāsaprahasana* of the Pallava king Mahendravarman (*circa* A.D. 600-30), probably provoked by the laxity on the part of certain monks of Kanchipuram, hurls derisive slings at Buddhism.

Hiuen Tsang also noticed a state of decline in most of the places. Thus, in the country of Chu-li-ya 'the Buddhist monasteries were in ruins, and only some of them had Brethren; there were several tens of Deva-temples, and the Digambaras were numerous. To the south-east of the capital, and near it, was an Asoka tope where the Buddha had preached ... Near the west side of the city was an old monastery where Deva p'usa had discussed with the arhat Uttara.'<sup>3</sup> The picture of Dravīḍa with its capital at Kanchipuram was comparatively bright, as the pilgrim noticed here more than a hundred monasteries with above ten thousand monks belonging to the Sthavira school.<sup>4</sup> The account of Mo-lo-kū-t'a, (Pāṇḍya with capital at Madura?), further south, was again gloomy. "There were many remains of old monasteries, very few monasteries were in preservation and there was

<sup>2</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1964-65—A Review* (New Delhi, 1969), pp. 24 and 25.

<sup>3</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), p. 224.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 226.



only a small number of Brethren. There were hundreds of Deva-temples, and the professed adherents of various sects, especially the Digambaras, were very numerous.<sup>5</sup> The pilgrim locates the Potalaka mountain, the favourite resort of Khasarpana Lokeśvara on the east of the Malaya hill in the south of this country.

We get hardly any information about the south from the account of I-tsing who, however, speaks of the monk Wu-hing's touching at Na-kia-po-tan-na on his way to Ceylon. Na-kia-po-tan-na apparently stands for Nagapattinam (pp. 194 ff.), a great Buddhist centre of international repute, which in course of its long chequered career enjoyed the benefactions of not only the native rulers like the Chola Rājarāja I, Rājendra and Kulottuṅga but the foreign ruler like Māravijayottuṅgavarman of Sumatra and Malay Peninsula. The construction of a typical Chinese pagoda (p. 196) here invested it with an additional importance. The catholicity and religious tolerance of the Chola rulers are further attested by an important copper-plate charter of Sundarachola, father of Rājarāja, found near Vedaranyam on the east coast of District Thanjavur, recording grants of land to a Buddhist temple, Sundaracholapperumpalli.

The Paliyam plates (about A.D. 868) of Varaguna of the Vṛishnikula preamble with an invocation to Śauddhodani (Buddha), *Dharma* and *Saṅgha* and record grants of land to the Bhaṭṭāraka of Tirumūlavādam.<sup>6</sup> The grip of Buddhism in the Travancore area is also proved by the discovery of a number of images of Buddha at Karumadi, Mavelikkara, Bharanikkavu, Pallikkal and Marudurkulangara.

One of the important *viḥāras* of the Mangalore region was Kadarikā located at Kadri (District South Kanara, Mysore), the name of the village being, no doubt, after the monastery. Three interesting bronzes, one of Buddha and the rest of Bodhisattvas, including one of the three-headed and six-armed Lokeśvara, were found in the temple of Mañjunātha, now dedicated to Śiva. The name of the temple, coupled with the find of the images, lends a strong presumption for the temple being originally Buddhist. The pedestal of the image of Lokeśvara bears an inscription in characters of the tenth century A.D., its purport being the dedication of an image of Lokeśvara in the Kadarikā-viḥāra by an Ālūpa ruler.

Among the celebrated images which were in worship in the south, Lokanātha, Tārā and Bhṛikuṭī-Tārā of Potalaka, Vasudhārā of Kaṁchinagara (Kanchipuram) and Mūlavāsa-Lokanātha of Dakṣiṇāpatha are illustrated on a manuscript (no. add. 1643) of A.D. 1015, now preserved in the Cambridge University Library.

In the Tamil country Buddhist images were noticed so far at Tyaganur (District Salem), Madagaram, Tiruvilanjuli, Elaiyur and Manambady (District Thanjavur), Tiruvatti (District South Arcot), Karur and Jayankondacholapuram (District Tiruchchirappalli), Kuvam (District Chingleput), Arikamedu (south of Pondichery), Karadikkuppam (north of Pondichery) and Manikandi (District Ramanathapuram), besides a

<sup>5</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), p. 228.

<sup>6</sup> T. A. Gopinatha Rao, 'Paliyam Plates of Varaguna of the Vṛishnikula', *Travancore Archaeological Series*, I (Madras, 1910-13), p. 187. Gopinatha Rao equates Tirumūlavādam with Śrīmūlavasam; cf. *Travancore Archaeological Series*, II, pt. II, p. 116.



beautiful gold-plated bronze image (photo 119) of Maitreya from Melayur (District Thanjavur).

In Mysore, too, Buddhism survived till a late date. One of the centres was Belgami (District Shimoga) where there are still some Buddhist vestiges. The Shikarpur (District Shimoga) inscription of 1065 commemorates the establishment of the Jayanti pra-Bauddha *vihāra* at Balligave (Belgami) by a minister, who also provided grants for the *vihāra* as well as for the worship of Tārā, Lokeśvara and Buddha with their attendant deities. An image of Tārā was found here, which was probably installed by Nāgiyakka, who is described in an inscription of A.D. 1098 as the *sāvāsī* or worshipper of the Buddhist temple. The Buddhists of Belgami, which was also a stronghold of both Brahmanism and Jainism, had to face severe opposition from the leaders of these rival sects whose exultant triumphs over Buddhism were vaunted in the inscriptions of the eleventh and twelfth centuries of this place. In the Koḍiya Maṭha of this place, a cosmopolitan centre of learning, Buddhist philosophy was taught along with other systems, as may be gathered from an inscription of A.D. 1162.

Another centre of Mysore was at Dambal (District Dharwar). An inscription from this place, dated in the Śaka year 1017 (A.D. 1095-96) during the reign of the Western Chālukya king Vikramāditya VI, records certain grants to the temples of Buddha and Tārā by some merchants.

The Hoysalas, as evident from a number of their inscriptions of the twelfth century A.D., followed an enlightened policy of religious toleration. Thus, the Tumkur inscription of 1151 invokes the universal spirit of Jina who is Śiva, Dhātri, Sugata (Buddha) and Viṣṇu. The Chiknayakahalli (District Tumkur, Mysore) inscription of 1181 describes Ballāladeva as a supporter of the followers of Maheśvara, Buddha, Viṣṇu and Arhat.

Buddhism continued its existence, though not very affluent, during the rule of the Vijayanagara rulers and the Nāyakas of Thanjavur. Sevvappa Nāyaka (sixteenth century A.D.) granted lands to a Buddhist temple at Tiruvilandurai, identified with Elandurai near Kumbhakonam.

Lurking traces of Buddhism in some parts of the south are also available in the itinerary of the Tantric Buddhist Buddhagupta, the *guru* of Tāranātha, as is preserved in the latter's *History of Buddhism in India*.

In view of the long career of Buddhism in the south, the extreme paucity of Buddhist monuments is rather intriguing. The prevalence of the conservative Theravāda, which did not encourage sumptuous buildings and prohibited the worship of Bodhisattvas, is attributed by some scholars to this scarcity. But this alone does not explain it, as a look at the countries with this form of Buddhism will show. Presumably, the anti-Buddhist activities of the other rival sects were responsible to a large extent for the disappearance of Buddhist monuments.

#### A. KANCHIPURAM

From very early times Kanchipuram (lat. 12° 50' N.; long. 79° 40' E.; District Chingleput, Tamil Nadu) was a reputed seat of Buddhism. The *Maṇimekalai* speaks of its



having enjoyed the patronage of the early Chola king Killi who established a *chaitya* and a *Buddha-piṭha* here. Many of the Buddhist writers are associated with this centre. A celebrity of this place was Dharmapāla, a famous teacher of Nālandā, mentioned by Hiuen Tsang.

Hiuen Tsang bears witness to the prosperity of Buddhism at Kanchipuram (p. 191) which was at that time the capital of Dravīḍa and also a port of southern India for Ceylon. 'Not far from the south of the capital was a large monastery which was a rendezvous for the most eminent men of the country. It had an Asoka tope about 100 feet high where the Buddha had once defeated Tīrthikas by preaching, and had received many into his communion. Near it were traces of a sitting-place and exercise-walk of the Four Past Buddhas'.<sup>7</sup>

The irresistible flood of revived Brahmanism under powerful philosophers like Śaṅkarācārya (circa A.D. 788-820) was not able to wipe out Buddhism from this centre, due, no doubt, to the sincerity and learning of the persevering monks. In about the twelfth century we find Anuruddha of the Pāṇḍyan land, a prolific writer, at the helm of the Mūlasoma-vihāra of this place. The Kalyani inscriptions at Zaingganaing (western suburbs of Pegu, Burma) of King Dhammacheti (A.D. 1472-92) of Pegu furnish an account of Ānanda Thera (died in A.D. 1245), a native of Kiñchipura (identified with Kanchipuram) and versed in the Pāli *Tripitaka*, who went to Pugama (Pagan) in Burma.<sup>8</sup> The records of Gaṇḍa-Gopāladeva (thirteenth century) refer to a community of merchants and its Bauddhapalli at this place. A Javanese poet (A.D. 1362) speaks of Buddhist monks residing in six monasteries of this place. A Korean inscription of A.D. 1378 narrates the travels of an Indian monk, Dhyānabhadra, who during his visit to Kāñchi, heard an illuminating discourse by a local Buddhist preacher.

Though Buddhist monuments have not come down to us, several images of Buddha, ranging in date from the seventh to the fourteenth century A.D., were found in and around the city. From the fact that two of the images, including a large impressive standing Buddha of about the seventh A.D., hailed from inside the enclosure of the Kāmākshī temple and a third from a garden by its side, it has been assumed by some scholars that the temple itself was originally Buddhist, later on appropriated by the Hindus. The Buddhist association of the locality is further suggested by two more images, one in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* and the other in *dhyāna-mudrā* of about the twelfth century A.D., found not far from it and now housed in the Karukkil-amarnda-amman temple. There was a second establishment near the Ekāmreśvara temple, as several late images of Buddha including one depicting the *mahā-parinirvāṇa*, are now fixed in the walls of the temple-complex. A seated image (photo 122) of Buddha (in *dhyāna-mudrā*) was found near the police-station of Big Kanchipuram.

#### B. NAGAPATTINAM

One of the important centres of Buddhism was Nagapattinam (lat. 10° 45' N.; long.

<sup>7</sup> T. Watters, *op. cit.*, II, p. 226.

<sup>8</sup> *Indian Antiquary*, XXII (1893), p. 29.



79° 50' E.; District Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu), an emporium on the east coast. In spite of the fact that all the Buddhist edifices, which for a long time adorned it, have been swept away, the uprooted remnants, in the form of hoards of bronzes, coupled with the inscrip-tional references and short but significant notices of the foreign writers conjure up before one the vision of a busy international port with its different quarters having their own cosy places of worship, built in their native architectural styles.

From very early times the port drew foreign merchants. A Buddhist temple is said to have been erected here specifically for the Chinese Buddhists at the instance of a Chinese king during the rule of the Pallava king Narasimhavarman II (circa A.D. 695-722).<sup>9</sup> As already noted (p. 192), Wu-hing on his way to Ceylon visited the place.

A curious legend is preserved in the *Guruparamparā* (twelfth century A.D.). The well-known Vaishṇava Ālvār Tirumaṅgai (eighth-ninth century A.D.) is stated to have gone to Nāgapattinam, stealthily robbed a Buddhist *vihāra* of its large Buddha-image of solid gold and melted it away to defray the cost of the renovation of the Raṅganātha temple of Srirangam. The chapel, in which this image was set up, seems to have been of foreign construction, as the Ālvār had to go to another island (*dvīpāntara*) where the architect, who had constructed the temple, was at that time living, to get the secret of the construction, before he embarked on such a risky task of entering a well-protected temple on this ignominious mission.

The next vision of this cosmopolitan Buddhist centre was afforded by the larger and smaller Leiden copper-plate grants, respectively of the mighty Chola kings Rājārāja I and Kulottuṅga.

From the Tamil portion of the larger Leiden plates it is gathered that the Chola king Rājārāja I in the twenty-first year (A.D. 1006) of his reign granted the revenues of the village of Āṇaimaṅgalam to the *paḷḷi* (temple) in the Chūlāmaṇivarman-vihāra which was being erected by the Kidāra king Chūlāmaṇivarman at Nāgapattinam. In the Sanskrit portion of the same plates which record the ratification of the grant by Rājendra, son of Rājārāja I, when he had ascended the throne after the death of his father, it is stated that Rājārāja granted the village of Āṇaimaṅgalam 'to the Buddha residing in the surpassingly beautiful Chūlāmaṇivarman-vihāra, of (such) high loftiness (as had) belittled the Kanakagiri (i.e. Meru), which had been built—in the name of his father, by the glorious Māravijayottuṅgavarman, ... who was born in the Śailendra family, who was the lord of the Śrī-vishaya (country), who was conducting the rule of Kaṭāha ... who was the son of Chūlāmaṇivarman ... at Nāgipattana delightful (on account of) many a temple, rest-house, water-shed, and pleasure garden.'<sup>10</sup> From the inscription it is seen that Māravijayottuṅgavarman of Śrī-vishaya (in Sumatra) and Kaṭāha (Keddah in Malay Peninsula) belonged to the Śailendra dynasty, one of the past kings of which earlier built a monastery at Nālandā (p. 86).

Kulottuṅga, again at the request of the ruler of Kadāram, granted in about A.D. 1090

<sup>9</sup> T. N. Ramachandran, *The Nāgapattinam and other Buddhist Bronzes in the Madras Museum*, Bulletin of the Madras Museum, New Series, General Section, VII, no. 1 (Madras, 1954), p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, XXII, p. 257.



lands to the Rājarājapperumpalli and Rājendraśolapperumpalli, both built by the king of Kaḍāram, the former being a part of the Chūlāmaṇivarma-vihāra.

The last glimpse of Nagapattinam as a living centre is afforded by the Kalyani inscriptions (A.D. 1476) of Dhammacheti, the king of Pegu. According to the inscriptions, a party of *theras* visiting Ceylon, being shipwrecked, trekked on foot to Nāgapattana, visited the site of the Padarikārāma monastery and worshipped an image of Buddha in a cave made under the orders of a king of Chinadeśa (China).<sup>11</sup>

The last vestige of the establishments—a unique firmly-built brick tower-like monument—had been standing till 1867 when it was pulled down by the Jesuits. It was variously known as the Puduveli-gopuram, old pagoda, black pagoda and Jeyna (Jaina) pagoda, Valentyn (1725), naming it as Pagood China (i.e. Chinese pagoda). In view of its peculiar non-Indian character, the monument, though a lost one, is described below.

According to an extract of a memoir by M. Textor de Ravisi, Senior Commandant of Karikal, 'the remains of this tower appeared to have a height of about 30 metres. It forms an irregular square of 11 m. 33 by 10 m. 66. The walls have a thickness of 4 m. 50. Each storey (or floor) overhangs on the interior by 0 m. 33 in a manner to form a summit. The primary opening was, as it is in more ancient Buddhist constructions, at 5 metres below the soil. The materials are of enormous bricks perfectly made and superior to those with which one builds nowadays in the country. The cement is a clayey earth only; at the interior and in superstructure to the width of 0 m. 75, the bricks are bound by a cement extremely hard.'

Fortunately, a sketch (photo 121) of the monument, prepared in 1846 at the instance of W. Elliot,<sup>12</sup> is illustrated in the seventh volume of the *Indian Antiquary*. This invaluable drawing sheds considerable light on the architectonic affiliation of the edifice. Outwardly, it had the appearance of a storeyed tapering structure, upper storeys gradually diminishing in size, so that it originally presented the appearance of an elongated stepped pyramid. The top of each storey is demarcated by a set of mouldings serving as a cornice. The four faces of the storeys were relieved with pilasters and had a central oblong opening in the middle. (There were traces of wooden lintel.) Three storeys are clearly visible and the broken top presents the appearance of having more. The interior was found to be hollow to the top, with traces of a ceiling at a height of 20 ft.

The similarity of this structure with the multi-storeyed brick pagoda of China is so close that there is hardly any scope for doubt about its source of inspiration. Evidently, it was designed by a Chinese architect and possibly represented the one referred to in the *Tao yi chi lio* (1349). 'T'ut'a (the eastern stupa) is to be found in the flat land of Pa-tan (Fattan, Negapatam ?) and that it is surrounded with stones. There is stupa of

<sup>11</sup> *Indian Antiquary*, XXII (1893), p. 45.

<sup>12</sup> W. Elliot found the structure 'to be a somewhat four-sided tower of three stories, constructed of bricks closely fitted together without cement, the first and second stories divided by corniced mouldings, with an opening for a door or window in the middle of each side. At the top of the lower story were marks in the wall, showing where the floor of the second had been fixed. The top was open. The base of the ground-story was worn out at the angles, from collision with passers-by and cattle, but the structure was solid and firm. No trace of sculpture or inscription was visible.' *Indian Antiquary*, VII, 1878, p. 224.



earth and brick many feet high; it bears the following Chinese inscription: "The work was finished in the eighth moon of the third year *hien chw'en* (1267)." It is related that these characters have been engraved by some Chinese in imitation of inscriptions on stone of those countries; up to the present time, they have not been destroyed.<sup>13</sup> Hien chw'en was the *nien hao* of Tu Tsung, an emperor of the Southern Sung dynasty.<sup>13</sup> Even at the time of Valentyn, its Chinese association was fresh in the people's memory.

Of capital interest, however, are the bronzes found in different hoards, one near the Puduveli-gopuram itself.<sup>14</sup> Numbering about three hundred fifty, they range from the early Chola to the Vijayanagara tradition and represent Buddha (photo 31), Lokanātha, Shaḍaksharī Lokeśvara, Maitreya (photo 120), Tārā, Jambhala, Vasudhārā, *arhats* and votive *stūpas* (photo 42) of diverse shapes, some having curious forms, no doubt, due to extraneous influences.

<sup>13</sup> H. Cordier, *Ser Marco Polo* (London, 1920), p. 114.

<sup>14</sup> One of the images of this hoard is particularly remarkable not only for its un-Indian features, but for its material which is reported to be a mixture of porcelain and clay.



## 10. ANDHRA PRADESH

Andhra Pradesh, untrodden by Buddha, received the faith most probably only during the reign of Aśoka. Two versions of the Minor Rock-Edict of this Emperor are at Rajula-Mandagiri and Yerragudi, both in District Kurnool. Amaravati was one of the Buddhist centres that sprang up during the Maurya times, as attested by a pillar-fragment with an inscription, most probably of Aśoka.<sup>1</sup>

The land, however, witnessed a phenomenal growth in Buddhist religion, art and architecture in the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era. The entire region from Salihundam (District Srikakulam) to Kanuparti (District Guntur) and from Gooty (District Anantapur) to Bhattiprolu (District Guntur) near the mouth of the Krishna in the east—Ramatirtham, Sankaram, Kotturu, Lingarajupalem, Nilavati, Arugolam, Kodavali, Adurru, Guntupalli, Kapavaram, Alluru, Gummadidurru, Garikapadu, Gudivada, Ghantasala, Jaggayyapeta, Vidyadharapuram, Amaravati, Pedaganjam, Chinnaganjam, Buddham, Velpuru, Rentala, Goli, Nagarjunakonda, Manchikallu, Uppugundur, Kondapuram, Panigiri, Yelleswaram and Gajulabanda, to name only a few sites—teems with Buddhist remains.

The magnificent art of Andhradeśa, which found its expression on the pale-greenish limestone of Palnad, had its richest flowerings mostly in the lower valley of the Krishna—Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, Jaggayyapeta, Ghantasala, Alluru, Gummadidurru, Goli and Bhattiprolu. The navigability of the lower reaches of this large river (called Maisolos by Ptolemy) fostered inland and sea-borne trade which was at its peak in the first and second centuries A.D. during the rule of the Sātavāhanas. The influx of gold through the prosperous ports like Ghantasala (Ptolemy's Kontakossyla) was utilized by the rich merchantile community, many of which were lay worshippers of Buddha, in erecting monumental edifices. Among the early centres, Amaravati, ancient Dhānyakāṭaka, took the leading role, bearing all the throes of experiments and a new creation. After a period of initial experiments, its plastic art reached its most dazzling phase in the second century A.D. during the regime of the later Sātavāhanas, who were always favourable to Buddhism. The art of Amaravati formed itself a School, and its influence was keenly felt in the sculptures of the contemporaneous south-eastern India. The zone of its influence extended along the coast further south and south-east till it reached Ceylon and limits of south-east Asia.

The rule of the Ikshvākus, who succeeded the Sātavāhanas about the beginning of the third century A.D. in the lower Krishna valley, witnessed a tremendous outburst of Buddhist structural activity in their capital Vijayapuri (Nagarjunakonda). Though the kings were Hindu, their queens, daughters and relatives professed Buddhism and were extremely liberal in their gifts. Under such a congenial atmosphere Nagarjunakonda became an internationally famous Buddhist centre—attracting pilgrims, monks and

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, XXXV, pp. 40-43.



nuns from distant lands like Ceylon. Its relation with that country was particularly intimate. One of the *chaitya-grihas* was built specially for the acceptance of the *āchāryas* of Ceylon. The entire valley became studded literally with Buddhist edifices—*stūpas*, temples and monasteries. Thus, Nagarjunakonda under the Ikshvākus became a rival to Amaravati in grandeur, almost putting into shade the glories of the latter, and its art, though itself an offshoot of the Amaravati School, imbibing all the elegant mannerism of the Amaravati style of the second-third century A.D., became equally magnificent.

An idea of the brisk architectural activity during the regime of the Ikshvākus may be had from an inscription of an *upāsikā* named Bodhisiri found at Nagarjunakonda. Her pious foundations, enumerated in this inscription, included: a *chaitya-ghara* (*chaitya-griha*) within the *vihāra* of Chuladharimmagiri at Nagarjunakonda; a *chaitya-ghara* within the Kulaha-vihāra (presumably built by a member of the Kulahaka family) at Nagarjunakonda; a *pāsāda* (*prāsāda*) for the *Bodhi* tree within the Sihala-vihāra (built either by the Ceylonese or for the accommodation of the Ceylonese monks, nuns or pilgrims) at Nagarjunakonda; a cell on Māhadharimmagiri, presumably at Nagarjunakonda; a *maṇḍapa*-pillar in the Mahāvihāra at Nagarjunakonda; a hall for religious practice at Devagiri; a tank, a verandah and a *maṇḍapa* at Puvaseḷa (*Pūrvaśaila*); a stone *maṇḍapa* at the eastern gate of the Mahāchaitya at Kaṁṭakasola (*Ghantasala*); three cells at Hirumuṭhuva; seven cells at Papilā; a stone *maṇḍapa* at Puphagiri (*Pushpagiri*); and a stone *maṇḍapa* in the *vihāra* of a locality, the name of which is illegible.

The glorious period of the Buddhist establishments of Nagarjunakonda, however, was short-lived. It eclipsed almost with the fall of the Ikshvākus, and Amaravati again regained its premier position. Under the Pallavas, who supplanted the Ikshvākus in the fourth century A.D., Brahmanism was more favoured. Buddhist art and religion were on a decline from the fifth century onwards. In the seventh century A.D. Hiuen Tsang noticed twenty odd Buddhist monasteries with more than three thousand monks in Andhra, while in the Dhānyakataka country 'was a crowd of Buddhist monasteries but most of them were deserted, about twenty being in use, with 1000 Brethren mostly adherents of the Mahāsaṅghika system'.<sup>2</sup> One after another the Buddhist centres of Andhradeśa started closing down. Bereft of royal patronage and popular following, the religion, too, receded in the background. The infiltration of Vajrayāna, with its pronounced emphasis on the female element and Tantric practices, perhaps precipitated the matters, and this was probably one of the reasons why the Buddhist mounds came to be known almost invariably *Lañja-dibba* (courtesan's mound) in Andhra Pradesh.

Amaravati, however, maintained its sanctity till the fag end of Buddhism in India. Up to the fourteenth century A.D., it was attracting pilgrims from Ceylon, where have been found several Buddhist sculptures in the characteristic styles of the early and later Schools of Amaravati. The Buddhist architecture of Andhradeśa produced a lasting effect on this island. Paradoxical as it may appear, it is a fact that a Ceylonese *sthavira*

<sup>2</sup> T. Watters, *op. cit.*, II, p. 214.



was the last-recorded devotee who strove to rekindle at Amaravati the dying flame of Buddhism which was flickering out in India itself.

#### A. AMARAVATI

Amaravati (lat.  $16^{\circ} 34' N.$ ; long.  $80^{\circ} 21' E.$ ; District Guntur), on the right bank of the Krishna, is approachable from Guntur, the distance being 21 miles. The ancient name of Amaravati was Dhānyakataka. The present Dharanikot, half a mile to the west, containing ruins of the ancient city in the form of high mounds, preserves the old name.

That Dhānyakataka remained a flourishing Buddhist centre from the third century B.C. to the thirteenth century A.D. is attested to by a large number of inscriptions found at the site itself. The nucleus of the Main Stūpa, called Mahāchaitya, which formed the principal focus of the Buddhist establishment, went back most probably to the third century B.C. (p. 198). To the third-second century B.C. are ascribable the earliest donative records,<sup>2</sup> some of them incised on granite uprights and plain limestone copings and cross-bars of the early railing around the stūpa.

The majority of the extant votive inscriptions, however, recording gifts of carved casing-slabs, pillars, uprights, cross-bars, copings, etc. by hundreds of devotees—monks, nuns, lay worshippers not only from Dhānyakataka but from different parts of India—belong to the second century A.D., when the Mahāchaitya, including its railing, underwent additions and embellishments unsurpassed by any other analogous contemporaneous monuments in India. This was the period when the art of the sculptors of Dhānyakataka reached its zenith. Intoxicated with a creative impulse, they went on producing reliefs after reliefs, which are now world-famous for their superb expressiveness and exuberance of beauty. One of these inscriptions, recording the gift of a *dharma-chakra* (apparently a wheel-crowned pillar) at the western gate of the Mahāchaitya, is dated in the reign of the Sātavahana king Pulumāvi<sup>3</sup> (circa A.D. 130-59). But there is nothing to suggest that the Sātavāhanas took any active part in it. The enormous cost of embellishment on such a grand scale was defrayed, as at Sanchi and Bharhut (p. 94), from the contributions of the inspired mass. Buddha, who was represented by symbols in the early reliefs mostly referable to the first century B.C. and A.D., appeared in this period on stone in his human form. The embellishment of the drum and the railing superseding the earlier ones continued even in the third century A.D.

The discovery of a good number of stone and bronze images of Buddha and also of the stone figures of Buddhist deities like Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, Lokeśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Heruka, etc., of the sixth to the eleventh century A.D., testifies not only to the prosperity of the Buddhist art and religion during the period, but also to the gradual transformation of Buddhism in its final Tantric Vajrayāna form.

An inscription of about A.D. 1100,<sup>4</sup> on a pillar excavated at the site, records the

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, XV, p. 259.

<sup>3</sup> Lander's List no. 1248.

<sup>4</sup> *South Indian Inscriptions*, I (Madras, 1890), pp. 25-28; *Ep. Ind.*, X, pp. 43 and 44.



erection of a statue (?) of Buddha by the Pallava king Simhavarman in the *parama-Buddha-kshetra* of Dhānyakaṭaka, which was sacred to Vitarāga. Another epigraph,<sup>6</sup> dated Śaka 1104 (A.D. 1182), and in the reign of Keta II, on a pillar of the local Amareśvara temple preambles with 'Om. There is a city (named) Śrī-Dhānyakaṭaka, which is superior to the city of the gods, (and) where (the temple of) Śaṁbhu (Śiva) (named) Amareśvara is worshipped by the lord of gods (Indra); where god Buddha, worshipped by the Creator, is quite close, (and) where (there is) a very lofty *Chaitya*, well decorated with various sculptures (*chaityam-atyunnataṁ yatra nānā-chitra-suchitritam*).<sup>7</sup> Although an worshipper of Amareśvara, King Keta of Dhānyakaṭaka granted three villages and two perpetual lamps to Buddha; two other inmates of his seraglio donated two more lamps. A second inscription, of A.D. 1234, on the same pillar, again records the gift of another perpetual lamp 'to god Buddha who is pleased to reside at Śrī-Dhānyaghāṭi'.<sup>8</sup>

Even as late as the fourteenth century Dhānyakaṭaka retained its international position in the Buddhist world, as is evident from the Gadadeniya (District Kandy, Ceylon) rock inscription,<sup>9</sup> dated 1344, in which Dharmmakirtti, a *sthavira*, is credited with the restoration of a two-storeyed image-house of Dhānyakaṭaka. Detailed description of Dharmmakirtti's worship of the 18-cubit high stone image of Buddha in the stone-built *vihāra* which he restored in Dhānyakaṭaka is preserved in the *Saddharmmaratnākara*, written by Vimalakirtti, the pupil's pupil of Dharmmakirtti. This is the last glimpse of the Buddhist establishment of Dhānyakaṭaka, for the later records are silent about it. Apparently, the religion, sapped of its vital forces, slowly died. Amareśvara gradually appropriated the position once enjoyed by Buddha, and the place came to be called Amaravati (the city of the gods) after the deity.

The visitor to the far-famed Amaravati cannot help experiencing a rude shock at the sight of an irregular mound marking the site where once stood the most magnificent *stūpa* of Andhra, surpassing in the richness of decorations even the Great *Stūpa* of Sanchi (p. 97). The shock becomes more acute when he is told that the complete destruction was partly due to hasty and unscientific excavations and mostly on account of planned spoliation by local people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for acquiring building-materials. Many of the sculptured stones were simply burnt for lime.

When Colonel Colin Mackenzie in 1797, first visited the site, Dipaldinne<sup>10</sup> (the hill of lamps), the local name of the mound containing the ruins of the Mahāchaitya, was a very large low mound, crowned in a turreted shape by a smaller one, some 20 ft. high and 90 ft. in diameter at the top and cased with bricks. Away from the centre and near the drum he found a ring-like pit, nearly 10 ft. wide, dug by a local *zamindar* to a depth of 12 ft. into the brickwork. When he revisited the site in 1816 with the object of making plans and drawings of the great monument, the major portion of the dome

<sup>6</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, VI., p. 155.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>8</sup> *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, IV (1943), pp. 90 ff.

<sup>9</sup> The name is perhaps reminiscent of the days when, lighted by hundreds of lamps offered by the devotees in the night, the Mahāchaitya looked like a hill of lamps.



had already been converted into a tank at the instance of the zemindar. The quarried bricks and stones from the dome and the drum of this *stūpa* and also those of other structures near it, including pillared *maṇḍapas* and temples, were utilized in the constructions of buildings and flight of steps to a tank. While digging the *stūpa*, the zemindar had found a stone box containing a crystal casket, inside which were a small pearl and some small leaves of gold (now in the Government Museum, Madras).

In 1845, Walter Elliot made a haphazard digging near the western gate and exposed a number of stone slabs, a portion of the railing and lions which crowned the entrances. The next excavation was carried out by R. Sewell in 1877, when he uncovered the north-western part of the mound and laid bare the flooring of the processional path and the scanty remains of the railing and drum-slabs. Whatever vestiges of the drum and the ground-balustrade existed after the vandalism of man were wiped away in 1880 by a Collector who, following the orders of the Governor of Madras to complete immediately the excavation, cleared the whole area of earth and débris, most of which was thrown in the tank dug by the zemindar.

Thus, when Burgess came to the scene, in 1881, he found a large pit, roughly circular and about 225 ft. in diameter with extensions at four cardinal points. About five hundred pieces of sculptured stones, salvaged from time to time since 1816, when Mackenzie encamped at Amaravati, have now found place in the Government Museum (Madras), British Museum (London), Indian Museum (Calcutta), Musée Guimet (Paris), Hyderabad Museum and the Archaeological Museum at Amaravati, the first having the richest collection.

In the first decade of the present century A. Rea excavated in the immediate precincts of the Mahāchaitya and exposed a few ruined structures including a *stūpa* (photo 124) with its drum faced with limestone slabs relieved with *stūpa*-motifs. Several limestone sculptures, inscribed and carved stones, a gold casket with six gold flowers and a piece of bone inside an earthen vessel, the latter hidden inside a ball of lime, and bronze figures of Buddha were also brought to light during his operations.

In course of the recent clearance of the site by the Archaeological Survey of India, the platforms of some votive *stūpas*, a few flimsy walls without any clear-cut plan, some superimposed over others, and a structure with figures of the deities of the Vajrayāna pantheon fixed to the exterior wall were exposed. The operation also yielded a small portion of the brickwork of the drum of the Mahāchaitya to a maximum height of six courses above the brick pavement of the circumambulation-path and also the lowest portion of the *āyaka*s. The most outstanding discovery, however, is the five crystal caskets (photo 123) in the slots of two stones within the core of the southern *āyaka*. The caskets yielded bones, beads, pearls, semiprecious stones and gold flowers. The clearance also brought to light a large number of architectural components, including uprights and cross-bars of the railing of more than one phase, many of them having donative records of the second century B.C. and later.

Particularly interesting among the finds is a damaged stele of greenish limestone. One of the faces of this stele, of the late second century B.C., is broken. The remaining three faces bear damaged reliefs with explanatory labels. Of these, one presents incidents



of the last three months of the life of Buddha from his sojourn at Vaiśālī to the *parinirvāṇa* at Kuśinagara; the reliefs (photo 69) depict *chaityas* of Vaiśālī (p. 74), including the Bahuputra-chaitya and the Chāpāla-chaitya, the Mahāvāna-kūṭāgāra-śālā, the site of the last look of Buddha at Vaiśālī, the miracle of turbulent waters on way from Vaiśālī to Kuśinagara and the *parinirvāṇa*. On the second face are represented the structural complex of Śrāvastī, purchase of Jetavana (p. 4) and the *ārāma* of Anāthapiṇḍika. The third face, much damaged, relates to Dhānyakāṭaka; it presents the structures by the side of a river (evidently, the Krishna) and mentions the *goshthi* called Vanda at Dhānyakāṭaka, which might have made significant contributions to the Buddhist establishment of Amaravati.

Piecing together the information gleaned from the invaluable drawings<sup>10</sup> and reports of Mackenzie and Sewell, available vestiges and antiquities, the representation of the *stūpa* on casing-slabs and analogy of other Andhra *stūpas*, it has been possible to establish a fairly correct data about the plan, general appearance and the ornamental details of the Mahāchaitya as rejuvenated and embellished in the second-third century A.D.<sup>11</sup> The drum-slab, illustrated on the photo 22, gives a good idea of the *stūpa* in its final grandeur.

The dome of the *stūpa* rested on a drum, about 6 ft. high, the outer diameter of the latter being about 168 ft. The latter had a projection (*āyaka*), 32 ft. by 6 ft., at four cardinal directions. There were five *āyaka*-pillars on each of these four projections. As there was no trace of any staircase leading to the terrace of the drum, the latter cannot be regarded as an upper processional path.

The outer face of the drum was veneered with oblong slabs carved with *stūpa*-representations,<sup>12</sup> alternating with ornate pilasters and capped by a decorated entablature cemented with each other with strong mortar (photo 22). The main themes of the carvings on the entablature are *Jātakas* and events from Buddha's life in larger compartments and an amorous couple in the smaller.

The vertical portion of the dome was also embellished with slabs (called *udhapāṭa*)

<sup>10</sup> Mackenzie's drawings and plans are now in the library of the Commonwealth Relations office. Most of them are reproduced in Fergusson's *Tree and Serpent Worship* and Burgess' *The Buddhist Stūpas of Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta*. His notes were published in the *Asiatic Researches* (IX, 1807) and *Asiatic Journal* (XV, 1823).

<sup>11</sup> As already noted (p. 200), the nucleus of the *stūpa* was most probably as old as the third century B.C. But there are no authentic records about its shape, dimensions and composition. It is not even known whether the diameter of the *stūpa* as recorded by Mackenzie held good in respect of the original *stūpa* or that the latter was of lesser dimensions buried within the core of the former, as in Stūpa 1 at Sanchi. In the case of the former alternative the dome was not of solid brickwork; whether its 8-ft. thick wall, forming the circumference, was strengthened with radial walls connecting other concentric circles or chess-boards of walls, as at Nagarjunakonda and Ghantasala, is not known. If the *stūpa* represented on the drum-slabs of the early phase, as distinct from that of the late phase of the second-third century A.D., is taken as the replica of the original *stūpa*, the latter was then without any *āyakas*. Recent clearance has shown that the existing *āyakas* are definitely much later than the original *stūpa* and may even be as late as the second century A.D.; relics found in the sockets of two stones, one a re-used railing-post, in the core of the southern *āyaka* (p. 202) are presumably referred to by the inscription no. 47 of pl. LX of Burgess, ascribable to the second century A.D.

<sup>12</sup> In its initial stage the veneer was done in a simple manner with plain slabs having carved pilasters and friezes.



relieved with scenes in three registers crowned by two friezes of running animals and *tri-ratnas* and also rows of *pūrṇa-ghaṭas*. The curved portion of the dome was most probably plastered in lime and decorated with swags, garlands, friezes, etc. in stucco. Over the top of the dome was a square *harmikā*-railing, from the centre of which rose the shaft of the *chhatrāvālī*.

Around the base of the drum and concentric with it was a processional path, 11 ft. 3 in. wide, paved with slabs of grey limestone. Below this path was found, during recent clearance, a well-laid flooring of neat brickwork. The floor was perforated with a large number of holes, apparently for the insertion of free-standing pillars crowned by *dharma-chakras*, *stūpas* and other symbols, which were erected by devotees at different times.

Edging the processional path was a railing (*vedikā*), one of the finest of its kind in India, pierced with four projecting gates facing the *āyakas*. Secured in brick foundation, the balustrade consisted of octagonal uprights, some 9 ft. high, with three cross-bars, the latter's lenticular ends fixed into the mortices of the former, crowned by a coping of 2 ft. 9 in. in height. Both the faces of the balustrade were most richly relieved (photo 17), the decoration of the inner face being more elaborate and distinguished for the edifying depiction of the scenes from the *Jātakas* and the life of Buddha.

The quadrants of the railing at entrance-openings, some 25 ft. wide, project radially outward for 16 ft., next turn at right angles for 6½ ft. and again project at right angles for about 8 ft. Guarding the gates, on the top of the rail, were four lions, two at the narrow front opening and two at the rear broad opening between the ends of two quadrants.

As already noted (p. 200), the railing, in its earliest phase, was plain, its granite uprights bearing lenticular sockets into which were fitted the cross-bars. The latter and also the coping were of limestone. A progressive development of style and a progression from simple to elaborate decoration are glaringly manifest in the extant remains of both the railing and drum-slabs. The palimpsests, showing the higher pitch of embellishment over the simple one, bear out conclusively that there was a constant endeavour to bring the decoration up to date by introducing new ones or reversing and recarving the old ones. The existence of the uncarved granite railing at places further proves that the aspirations were never fulfilled to the fullest extent, presumably due to lack of funds, as the ambitious building schemes of the newly-founded capital of the Ikshvākus, who supplanted the Sātavāhanas in this region in the third century A.D., diverted the people and the artists to Vijayapurī, represented by modern Nagarjunakonda.

## B. NAGARJUNAKONDA

Of all the Buddhist settlements in Andhra Pradesh, those of Nagarjunakonda (lat. 16° 31' N.; long. 79° 14' E.; District Guntur), 14 miles from the Macheral railway-station, were by far the most extensive, being nestled in various localities, some on low hillocks, spread over a few miles within a hill-girt valley with the Krishna on the west babbling through hills. Its strategic situation, due to complete isolation effected by hills (offshoots of the Nallamalai range), with the additional advantage of a river, which, with its rocks and sand-banks on its bed, is, however, not navigable in most



seasons of the year, was at the root of the selection of the site of Vijayapuri, the capital of the Ikshvākus. The same natural advantages were taken into consideration when, a few years back, it was decided to convert the valley into a reservoir under the irrigation-project of the Nagarjunasagar Dam.

'Nagarjunakonda' means the hill (*koṇḍa*) of Nāgārjuna who is usually identified, on the basis of a Tibetan tradition, with the famous Buddhist teacher of that name, contemporary of a Śātavāhana king of the second century A.D. This teacher is said to have spent his last days in a monastery on the Śrīparvata, the latter identified with the chain of hills (offshoots of the Nallamalai range) round Nagarjunakonda on the evidence of the inscription of Bodhisiri (pp. 199 and 207). The association of this particular teacher with this site, however, still remains uncorroborated by archaeological finds.

In order to salvage the remains from submergence due to the construction of the Nagarjunasagar Dam across the Krishna, an excavation on an unprecedented scale was undertaken covering a period of seven years since 1954. Following the official discovery of the site in 1926 by A. R. Saraswati of the Epigraphical Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India, the site had been previously excavated too.<sup>13</sup> Before the valley was converted into a reservoir, a few important monuments had been reconstructed with the ancient material on the Nagarjunakonda hill (now transformed into an island) and on the eastern bank of the reservoir. Small-scale replicas of several monuments have also been erected on the hill. The antiquities found in the excavations are in the Archaeological Museum constructed on this very hill.

The period of the intensive creative activity in the valley coincided with the rule of the Ikshvākus, specially the second, third and fourth rulers (*circa* second half of the third century A.D. and first half of the fourth century A.D.), Virapurushadatta, his son Ehuvala Chāntamūla and the latter's son Rudrapurushadatta. No Buddhist structure could specifically be ascribed to the reign of the Śātavāhanas. At the same time, it is very likely that Buddhism existed here, though on a modest scale, in the Śātavāhana period. Indeed, a pillar-inscription of the sixth regnal year of the Śātavāhana king Gautami-putra Vijaya-Śātakarṇi opens with an invocation to *aga-pogala*, an epithet of Buddha.<sup>14</sup> As already noted (pp. 15 and 198), the ladies of the Ikshvāku dynasty were munificent patrons of the Buddhist establishments here.

Available evidence points to a sudden failure of creative impulse immediately after the fall of the Ikshvākus in the fourth century A.D., but the actual circumstances are not known. The establishments probably continued to hold their fabrics for some years more but not long afterwards. The complete absence of Buddhist sculptures later than the fifth century A.D. and also of even elementary Bodhisattvas is significant. The study of architecture also substantiates this. Though there were a few establishments showing more than one period of construction, one superimposed above the other, the architectural form hardly evinced any appreciable evolution. The pattern was almost standardized; the

<sup>13</sup>*As. Rep. Arch. Surv. Ind.*, 1926-27, pp. 156-61 (Some of the mounds were dug even before by unknown treasure-hunters.); *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakonda, Madras Presidency*, Mem. Arch. Surv. Ind., 54 (Delhi, 1938); *Nāgārjunakonda* 1938, Mem. Arch. Surv. Ind., 71 (Delhi, 1953).

<sup>14</sup>*Ep. Ind.*, XXXVI, pp. 273 and 274.



only attempts towards novelty were the varieties in the grouping of different structures forming a unit, which in a complete one was an assemblage of a *stūpa* (called *chetiya* in inscriptions), one or two sanctuaries (called *chetiya-ghara*) and a *maṇḍapa* in the centre of a quadrangle around which abutted wings of the monastery (*viḥāra*) with ancillary cells like a kitchen, store-room, refectory, bath-room, etc.

The most outstanding feature of this centre was that a *stūpa* had rarely an existence, independent of a monastery. Almost all the establishments were self-sufficient, each having its own *stūpa* for worship and in important units a sanctuary. While a single unit (Site 51) did not present an open-air *stūpa*, there were five Sites (15A, 16, 22, 52 and 59) with *stūpas* unconnected with other structures.

Side by side flourished different sects in their individual units. The names of only a few of these sects are preserved in inscriptions. Thus, the Mahāchaitya complex<sup>15</sup> (Site 1), comprising the Great Stūpa, an apsidal *chetiya-ghara* with a stone-cased *stūpa* and a three-winged monastery around a hall (*maṇḍapa*) of thirty-six pillars, built by Chāritisiri, sister of the first Ikshvāku ruler Chāntamūla and paternal aunt and also mother-in-law of the second king Virapurushadatta, during the reign of the latter, with the assistance of a few other ladies, mostly of the royal blood,<sup>16</sup> was dedicated to the Aparamahāvīnaseliya sect.<sup>17</sup> The same sect again was not only in possession of another unit (Site 9; photo 125) comprising a *stūpa*,<sup>18</sup> two apsidal sanctuaries, one with a *stūpa* and the other with an image of Buddha, and a *maṇḍapa* with a three-winged monastery,<sup>19</sup> but also of some establishment near the so-called Hāriti temple complex.<sup>20</sup>

An establishment (Site 5), comprising a *stūpa*, two apsidal sanctuaries, each enshrining a *stūpa*, and a four-winged monastery with a pillared *maṇḍapa*, built on an earlier monastic complex, besides three special cells, one oblong and two circular (internally square), and a pillared structure, at the foot of the Nagarjunakonda hill was dedicated by Bhaṭṭidevā, the queen of Virapurushadatta, during her son's (Ehuvula Chāntamūla) reign to the āchāryas of the Bahuśrutīya sect.<sup>21</sup>

Kodabalīsiri, the queen of the mahārāja of Vanavāsaka (Banavasi, District North

<sup>15</sup> The *stūpa* (no. 1 of Longhurst), the *chetiya-ghara* (Temple 1 of Longhurst) and the *maṇḍapa* were first excavated by M. H. Kuraisi (who filled them again) and next by A. H. Longhurst. The monastery was later on exposed by T. N. Ramachandran (cf. his Site no. 2). Inscriptions nos. A, B, C, D, E and M of Vogel's list (*Ep. Ind.*, XX, pp. 16-22; *ibid.*, XXI, pp. 64-68) pertain to this.

<sup>16</sup> One of them was Queen Rudradharabhaṭṭārikā, the daughter of a Satrap of Ujjain, who besides dedicating an āyaka-pillar of the Mahāchaitya contributed a sum of one hundred and seventy *dināri-māsakas* towards the cost incurred by Chāritisiri for the construction of the Mahāchaitya. The *stūpa* was built in the sixth regnal year of the king, the *maṇḍapa* of the monastery and the *chaitya-griha* having been added in the fifteenth and eighteenth regnal years respectively.

<sup>17</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, XXXV, pp. 7-9.

<sup>18</sup> No. 9 of Longhurst.

<sup>19</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1957-58—A Review* (New Delhi, 1958), pp. 8 and 9.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 1954-55, pp. 22 and 23. Near the foot of the raised ground, on which the complex was perched, was a spacious quadrangular enclosure with stepped brick benches, as in a gallery, on all sides, evidently for an audience. The seats were veneered with smoothly-finished Cuddapah slabs.

<sup>21</sup> Stūpa no. 5 and Monastery III of Longhurst. Inscriptions G (*Ep. Ind.*, XX, pp. 23 and 24) and G<sub>2</sub> and G<sub>3</sub> (*ibid.*, XXI, pp. 61-63).



Kanada) and sister of King Ehuvala Chāntamūla, donated in the eleventh year of her brother's reign a *chaitya*<sup>22</sup> (i.e. *stūpa*) with a large four-winged monastery attached to it (Sites 7-8) to the masters of the Mahīśāsaka sect.<sup>23</sup>

A *chetiya-ghara*, enshrining a *stūpa*, was dedicated for the exclusive use of the Theravādin *āchāryas* of Ceylon (p. 199) by the *upāsikā* Bodhisiri in the *vihāra* of Chuladhammagiri (locally called Naharallabodu), to the east of Vijayapurī on the Śrīparvata,<sup>24</sup> in the fourteenth year of Virapurushadatta. In this complex (Site 43) were a *stūpa*, an apsidal *chaitya-griha* and a quadrangular monastery with four wings.

An inscription on a slab relieved with the footprints of Buddha found in Site 38<sup>25</sup> records its installation in the monastery of Vibhajjavādin (a prominent sect of Ceylon) Mahāvihāravāsin teachers who converted Kashmir, Gandhāra, Yavana, Vanavāsa and Tāmraparṇī-dvīpa. Evidently, this complex was the prerogative of this particular sect. It consisted of a four-winged monastery surrounding its main *stūpa*, a number of votive *stūpas* and an apsidal shrine (built at a later phase). The main *stūpa* here and also in the preceding complex was solid without any *āyakas*.

Of the seven establishments mentioned above, three (Sites 1, 5 and 7-8) were the gifts of the female members of the royal family of the Ikshvākus. Another large unit (Site 24), consisting of an eight-spoked *stūpa*, an apsidal sanctuary with a *stūpa*, a sixteen-pillared *mandapa* enclosed on all sides by a four-winged monastery and an independent circular structure at the south-west corner of the monastery,<sup>26</sup> was most probably due to Vammabhaṭṭā, mother of Rudrapurushadatta and daughter of a Mahākshatrapa, as the memory-pillar was raised, after her death, in front of the apsidal hall between the monastery and the *stūpa*.

Remains of more than thirty Buddhist establishments were brought to light, the majority of which were full-fledged units. Fig. 3 (p. 29) illustrates the typical plan of a complete unit (photo 47). Except in Site 38, the *stūpa* was found invariably at the head. Erected between the monastery and the *stūpa* was the *chetiya-ghara*, either one or two (in the latter case facing each other), constructed close to the monastery and in some cases within the monastic enclosure itself.

With rare exceptions all the main *stūpas* had projections (*āyakas*); the pillars on the *āyakas*, wherever they were available, were of a uniform pattern—square below and octagonal above, the lines of the edges of the octagon meeting at the crest of the convex top;

<sup>22</sup> *Chetiya* has been read as *khaniya*, which is wrong.

<sup>23</sup> *Stūpa* 8 and Monastery IV of Longhurst. Inscription H of Vogel's list (*Ep. Ind.*, XX, pp. 24 and 25).

<sup>24</sup> Site 3 of Kuraishi (*An. Rep. Arch. Surv. Ind.*, 1926-27, pp. 159 and 160) and Temple 2 and Monastery I of Longhurst (pp. 9 and 10).

<sup>25</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1955-56—A Review* (New Delhi, 1956), p. 24, Site V-6; *Ep. Ind.*, XXXIII, pp. 247-50. The intimate intercourse between Ceylon and the lower Krishna valley through the mouth of the Krishna and the sea is reflected not only in the art but also in the architecture of the contemporary Ceylon which has adopted many of the architectural members including even the projections like *āyakas*; cf. S. Paranavitana, *The Stūpa in Ceylon*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, V (1946), p. 59. It appears that the impact of Ceylon also, in respect of art and architecture, was felt in this region too, but this point has not been sufficiently studied.

<sup>26</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1955-56—A Review*, p. 24; *Ep. Ind.*, XXXIV, pp. 20-22.



rarely, the sides of the square were relieved with figures of Buddha.<sup>27</sup> Whether the *stūpa* without *āyakas* preceded the one with it was not indisputably established. Curiously enough, both the *stūpas* which may definitely be associated with the monks and sect of Ceylon where a *Bodhi* tree is an almost invariable adjunct of the monastic establishment, were without *āyakas*.<sup>28</sup>

The *stūpas* were either of brick or of rubble, the mortar being clay. Generally, the former varieties were not of solid brickwork and their interior constructions displayed considerable varieties. The walls were arranged in the form of a wheel with a rim and spokes—four, six, eight and ten—radiating from a central hub (sometimes absent in four-spoked *stūpas*), either square or circular. In the case of the larger *stūpas*, strength was ensured by the additions of rings connected by further radial walls, the Mahāchaitya (Site I) of Chāntisiri, the largest with a diameter of 91 ft., having as many as three concentric rings around the central circular hub with the three resultant rows of cells (eight in the inner and sixteen each in the middle and the outer) formed by radial walls. In three *stūpas* was found a brick *svastika* in the centre. A few *stūpas* were entirely of rubble.

The *stūpas* were invariably coated with plaster of lime. Some of them<sup>29</sup> received embellishments in the form of carved limestone slabs (photos 2 and 126), covering not only the drum, but also the dome including the curved portion. The subject-matter and style exhibited by most of the carvings owed their essentials to the last phase of the Mahāchaitya at Amaravati (i.e. third century A.D.); the reliefs, notwithstanding their grandeur, had culminated into mannered extravagance.

Railings were not found *in situ* in any of the *stūpas*; a few dislocated pieces, however, were noticed. The Mahāchaitya had a low brick wall pierced with four entrances around the processional path.

A spacious platform below the drum of the *stūpa* was more common; it was, in many cases, faced with stone slabs panelled with pilasters, raised copings and base-mouldings. The complete form of the *stūpa* is to be conjectured from reliefs alone, as none of the extant ones stood to their top.

Of the bone relics found in a number of *stūpas*,<sup>30</sup> that within the Mahāchaitya, found in one of the outermost north-western cells, was believed to have been of Buddha.<sup>31</sup> It was placed in a gold reliquary, the latter with a few gold flowers, pearls and pieces of garnet and crystal kept inside a silver *stūpa*-shaped casket. The silver casket in its turn with three large crystal beads and an ear-stud was deposited in an earthen pot. Even more meticulous care was noticed in Stūpa 8 of Longhurst, where the bone-relic was preserved in a series of *stūpa*-shaped caskets, one within the other, the innermost one being of gold, the next of silver, the third of copper, the next of glazed earthenware and the outermost of stone.

<sup>27</sup> Stūpa 6 of Longhurst.

<sup>28</sup> A *pāsāda* for the *Bodhi* tree was erected by Bodhisiri in Sihala-vihāra (p. 199).

<sup>29</sup> Nos. 2, 3, 6 and 9 of Longhurst. A few more *stūpas* were found in recent excavations to contain some such slabs.

<sup>30</sup> Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 of Longhurst; Stūpas 9 and 21 (Site VIII, *Indian Archaeology 1955-56—A Review*, p. 24).

<sup>31</sup> Now in the Mūlagandhakuṭi-vihāra of Sarnath.



In a few of the *stūpas* relics of a number of individuals, deposited in pots, were put on the floors of the cells of the *stūpa*.<sup>32</sup> Evidently, they had been stored for a number of years before they were enshrined in the *stūpas*.

The shrines, consecrating either a *stūpa* or an image of Buddha, were of three varieties—apsidal, circular and oblong, the first being the most frequently used. Astylar in construction, the apsidal one, made of brick, was semicircular at the back and had often re-entrant angles at either extremity of the front side. Around it was a platform, often apsidal. The only decoration of the wall was a broad moulding, rounded at the top, at the base of the exterior wall. The same moulding also occurred in most of the cells of the monastery. The base of the exterior wall had sometimes stone casing. The superstructure was not preserved in any; from sculptured parallels and the Kapoteśvara temple at Chejerla (District Guntur) it may be presumed that the roof was barrel-vaulted with a row of pottery finials (of which some have been found near the structures) at the crest. The floor was either concreted or paved with bricks or stone slabs. The apsidal pedestal of the image (which was usually standing) occupied the entire apse-end. The *stūpa* in important ones was veneered with stones and had three gradually-diminishing mouldings, relieved with lotus-petals, at the base and a parapet at the top of the high cylindrical drum. The globular or hemispherical dome was low. The entrance in the case of important ones was provided with one or more stone steps flanked by a stone parapet, its ends shaped like the fore part of a *makara*. In front of the steps were semicircular *chandra-śilās* (moonstones), rarely carved with bands, of which two relieved with a procession of animals were superb.<sup>33</sup> This feature had its richest flowering in Ceylon. The *mandapas* and sometimes cells also were provided with this type of entrances, but in these cases plain moonstones were used.<sup>34</sup>

The circular shrines, with inside both circular and oblong, were rare, the oblong shrines being still rarer. The circular form, of which two good examples exist at Salihundam (p. 222) and two (one being rock-cut) at Guntupalli (pp. 217 f.), was also adopted in some dwelling-cells, probably meant for distinguished persons.

The monastery was one-, two-, three- or four-winged, the third being the most popular. Each wing had its own verandah. The wings were generally arranged around a central *mandapa*. The kitchen, refectory, etc., were built in important examples outside the main unit but connected with it by a door. The walls flanking the entrances were, in many cases, embellished with pilasters having *ghaṭa*-bases placed on stepped members. Attached to the front walls of the cells, between pilasters, were often benches veneered with stones. Every unit had a stone trough for making lime, the use of lime-plaster being almost ubiquitous. The drainage-system was fairly well-developed.

Though ordinary *mandapas* with wooden pillars were known to have been used, elaborate ones with stone pillars were more in vogue. There were cases where the latter were found built over the former. The *mandapa* in some units was faced with stone slabs in the

<sup>32</sup> Nos. 4 and 5 of Loughurst.

<sup>33</sup> Pl. XII B of Memoir no. 71.

<sup>34</sup> Pl. XXV of Memoir no. 71.



manner of the platform of *stūpas*. Usually it had open sides, and its roof was supported by pillars. In a few cases, however, were found remains of a screen in the form of plain stone slabs inserted between carved pilasters. The stone pillars, whether carved or uncarved, were oblong below and above and octagonal in the middle with the chamfering of corners of the oblong. The decoration consisted of half lotus-medallions with a horizontal frieze of creepers or animals immediately below and above the octagon and a lotus bud or a blue lotus at the chamfering. The pillars were provided with chases to receive wooden beams, on which were placed, in some cases, flat limestone slabs of thin section. The floor was either concreted or paved with stone slabs.

### C. GOLI

Adjoining the village of Goli (lat. 16° 35' N.; long. 79° 31' E.; District Guntur), 3 miles from Rentachintala, is the denuded site of a small establishment on the bank of the stream Goli-wagu. An irregular pit with a few brick-bats marks the spot where once stood a small but profusely-decorated *stūpa*. Most of the limestone sculptures, found by G. Jouveau-Dubreuil who excavated it in 1926, are now in the Madras Museum. The few remaining sculptures, including a long frieze depicting the pathetic story of Nanda's forced ordination (p. 4), left at the site were removed afterwards surreptitiously by an unknown hand with the exception of a seven-hooded *nāga* which is at present in worship in the shed built at the site. The frieze with the conversion of Nanda found its way ultimately to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The *stūpa* was embellished with limestone slabs sculptured in the style of Nagarjunakonda. The friezes of the drum depict scenes from the life of Buddha, like Buddha's visit to Yaśodharā, subjugation of the elephant Nālāgiri (p. 6), assault and temptation of Māra (p. 2), offering of food by Sujātā (p. 2) and conversion of Nanda (photo 128), and *Jātakas*, like *Māti-ṣoṣaka Jātaka*, *Sasa Jātaka* (p. 94), *Vessantara Jātaka* (p. 94; photo 127), *Chhaddanta Jātaka*, etc. These scenes are arrayed in larger compartments, while amorous couples occur in smaller ones, with a *nāga-rāja* or *śālabhaṅjikā* playing on a harp at the extreme ends. The *stūpa* is dated to the third century A.D. on the basis of a small fragmentary inscription.

The existence of two pillars with a chase on the top and decorated with half lotus-medallions and the fragment of the stone parapet (with a creeper-pattern) of the drum of a votive *stūpa* at the site make it certain that there were at least a *mandapa* and a *chaityagriha*, if not a full-fledged monastery, at the site.

The material for the casing slabs were readily available at the site itself. Indeed, the banks of the stream together with the neighbouring places form a rich quarry of limestone, mostly of the greyish and rarely of the greenish colour.

### D. JAGGAYYAPETA

The village of Jaggayyapeta (lat. 16° 54' N.; long. 80° 5' E.; District Krishna) is situated at a distance of 4 miles from the confluence of the Krishna and the Paler and is



approachable by bus from Vijayawada, the distance being 48 miles. The venue of the Buddhist establishment here is a low hillock (locally called Dhana-bodu), the Velagiri of yore, running almost parallel to the road leading to the village. Like Amaravati, which is about 30 miles south-east, the remains have suffered ruthless destruction at the hands of the local people.

The remains consist of the drum-portion of the Main Stūpa, called Mahāchaitya in the inscriptions, and a ruined pillared *maṇḍapa* immediately to its south-east, besides a few inconspicuous mounds. The drum, 63 ft. in diameter, now stands to a height of 3 ft. 9 in. and has four projections (*āyakas*) facing the cardinal directions. It is embellished with greenish limestone slabs which are fixed to the roughly-dressed masonry of the ring-like wall by a thick lime mortar. The core of the *stūpa* is filled in with layers of earth, 2 ft. thick, alternating with closely-fitted brick floorings.

The facing slabs of the drum stand to a height of 3 ft. 9 in. above the floor-level of the processional path. With a projected base and top, they are divided into panels, austere plain except those used in the *āyakas*, by carved pilasters, the latter's low reliefs reminiscent of the analogous ones of the early phase of Amaravati. Each pilaster has on its shaft a male or female devotee standing on a composite animal with the tail of a *makara*, the latter squatting on a *ghaṭa* above the stepped base. The capital consists of a decorated bell-shaped member with a cable or bead-and-reel necking capped by a stepped abacus on which rest two addorsed animals, often winged and sometimes with riders. The pose of the standing figures is somewhat awkward and void of flexions.

The facing slabs of the *āyakas* are distinguished by reliefs on the panels, of which one having a couple worshipping with flowers a *stūpa* is still *in situ*. Two more reliefs, one depicting worship of Buddha, represented symbolically, within a barrel-vaulted shrine and the other Chakravartin Māndhātā (photo 129), are now in the Madras Museum.

Over the drum-slabs was a detachable coping, containing reliefs of seated figures of Buddha alternating with *stūpas*, each in a separate compartment.

Each of the *āyakas* had five pillars of the usual type (p. 207), which were later additions. The pillars on the eastern *āyaka* were the gift, as recorded by inscriptions on three of them, of an artisan (*avesani*) family during the reign of the Ikshvāku king Virapurushadatta (p. 205).

Around the processional path was a plain railing of limestone, of which fragments have been recovered.

What now remains of the *maṇḍapa* is a number of pillars, mostly fallen. They are octagonal in the middle, the remaining portion being oblong with reliefs of half medallions of exquisite beauty.

The fragments of the images of Buddha in the round and also the carved base of a votive *stūpa* of the type usually found in the apsidal *chaitya-grihas* leave no room for doubt about the existence of the shrines in the immediate vicinity of the Mahāchaitya. One of the reliefs of Buddha bears, below the feet, the record of Chandraprabha, the disciple's disciple of Nāgārjunācharya in characters of the sixth or seventh century A.D., proving thereby the continued existence of Velagiri as a Buddhist centre at least up to that period.



## E. GUMMADIDURRU

Gummadidurru (lat. 16° 52' N.; long. 80° 18' E.; District Krishna) is a small village, 6 miles off the Madira railway-station (Vijayawada-Hyderabad line). Excavations on the eastern spur of a hill, only a furlong off Ramareddipalli, unearthed the lower portion of the Main Stūpa with its drum veneered by a splendid array of sculptured slabs (photo 130), besides two long walls, one passing over the other at right angles, and a dozen small stūpas. One of these small stūpas was enshrined in the apse of an apsidal *chaitya-griha*. Remains of many more structures are still lying unexposed in the extensive area around the Main Stūpa. This is one of the very few Andhra centres which had a prolonged existence, as is evident from an inscription of the second century A.D. on a votive stūpa and a find of one hundred and twenty-seven clay tablets inscribed with the Buddhist creed (p. 4) in characters of the mediaeval period.

The drum of the Main Stūpa, 55 ft. in diameter, stands to a height of 4 ft. and has four projections, 13 ft. 4 in. by 2 ft., facing the cardinal directions. The core of the stūpa is not of solid brickwork. The hub is a square brick structure with a filling of rubble and brick-bats in mud. Its central part is in the form of a brick *svastika* with a central hole, 2 in. square. Eight walls, emanating from the middle and corners of the square hub, join the circular rim. Inside the stūpa, but 6 ft. north of the centre, was found a silver casket containing a piece of bone.

The drum is adorned, as at Amaravati, with oblong slabs, each relieved with an elaborate stūpa with all its paraphernalia, alternating with pilasters, carved mostly with figures in vertical rows flanking usually a pillar either with flames or with a *dharma-chakra* at the top and a throne with symbols like footprints at the base.<sup>35</sup> The horizontal frieze (on detachable stones in some cases), which crowns the stūpa-representations and pilasters, depicts scenes, which include those from the life of Buddha and *Jātakas*, in larger compartments and a couple in smaller ones. One of the drum-slabs with the frieze is almost complete, which gives the height of the drum as 4 ft. 6 in. The slabs facing the side walls of the *āyakas* are relieved with scenes from the life of Buddha arrayed in compartments. The decoration of the drum was completed in the third century A.D., as evidenced by a damaged inscription on two pieces of a drum-frieze recording the construction of the Mahāchaitya by a native of Dakṣiṇāpatha.

Edging the western *āyaka* is a standing figure of Buddha in *vara-mudrā* (photo 130), containing a dedicatory record, of a monk called Rāhula, in characters of about the seventh century A.D.

Immediately to the north-north-west of the Main Stūpa and only 7 ft. 3 in. away from it is a brick *chaitya-griha* with its curved south-eastern wall alone exposed. The stūpa, 10 ft. in diameter, within the shrine was faced with greyish limestone slabs. Two pieces, forming part of the parapet of the drum of this stūpa, contain a fragmentary inscription in characters of the second century A.D.

<sup>35</sup> The sculptured facing stones have recently been shifted to the Amaravati Museum for safety. Earlier, one of the sculptured pieces found its way to the Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio, U.S.A.



## F. ALLURU

The village of Alluru (lat. 16° 46' N.; long. 80° 26' E.; District Krishna) is situated at a distance of 4 miles from the Yerrupalem railway-station on the Vijayawada-Hyderabad line.

The *stūpa*, excavated here in 1926, is now reduced to a shapeless low mound of earth and bricks, the latter rare on the surface. None of the sculptured pieces unearthed is now traceable in the village. A limestone pillar, inscribed in characters of the second century A.D. and relieved with half lotus-medallions (evidently forming part of a Buddhist *mandapa*), alone lies in the compound of the Śiva temple of the village. The antiquity of the Buddhist establishment is, therefore, at least as old as the second century A.D., if not earlier.

The brick *stūpa* was built in the form of a wheel with a circular solid hub, 32 ft. 8 in. in diameter, spokes and a tyre; the sixteen cells, formed by the spokes, were filled in with brick-bats and earth. The drum, 76 ft. 8 in. in diameter, had four *āyakas* (with the usual pillars on them), 14 ft. 8 in. by 2 ft. It was originally faced with carved slabs, though none of them was found *in situ*. The excavator noticed two floorings of the processional path, superimposed one above the other, the earlier one (10 ft. 6 in. wide) concreted and edged with a one-brick thick wall and the later one paved with slabs enclosed by a thicker wall pierced with four entrances opposite the *āyakas*. The brickwork, in mud mortar, of the hub existed to a height of 7 ft. 2 in.

The site has yielded four limestone standing images of Buddha in the round, of which the largest (5 ft. 10 in. without the feet) is housed in the Victoria Jubilee Museum, Vijayawada.<sup>36</sup> But for the missing left palm, right hand and the feet, the image (photo 25), with prominent folds of the upper robe which leaves its right shoulder uncovered, is in a perfect state of preservation. The remaining three images, found a few years back, are housed in the Archaeological Museum of Amaravati. They are analogous to the standing images of Amaravati of the third-fourth century A.D.

The antiquities unearthed at the site include casing slabs with carvings and a fragment of a stucco head.

From the fact that certain gifts, including land and money, were recorded in the inscribed pillar in favour of the *nikāya* of the Pūvaseliyas (Pūrvaśailiyas), it is presumed that this particular sect was in possession of this establishment.

## G. BHATTIPROLU

Bhattiprolu (lat. 16° 6' N.; long. 80° 47' E.; District Guntur) is a railway-station on the Guntur-Repalli line and is about 4 miles from the right bank of the Krishna. The *stūpa*, the only extant remains, is now an irregular mass of brickwork with concentric courses of bricks visible at places. Both in respect of sanctity and dimensions it was at one time next only to the Mahāchaitya at Amaravati (p. 200), as it yielded the corporeal

<sup>36</sup> A few limestone sculptures, including two fragmentary drum-slabs relieved with *stūpa*-representations, a small standing image of Buddha and pillar-fragments, one with an inscription, of unrecorded provenance are also in this museum.



relics of Buddha. In the second half of the nineteenth century it was extensively denuded of its bricks and stones, including the carved ones, for the construction respectively of the roads and a sluice in one of the Krishna canals. In course of the demolition of the mound (locally known as *Lañja-dibba*), which was at that time standing to a height of 30 to 40 ft., was found a crystal reliquary containing some ashes along with a few bits of gold leaf and a pearl.

Later, in 1892, Alexander Rea made a partial excavation of the ruined mass and succeeded in tracing the plan of the *stūpa*. Of solid brickwork, the dome of the *stūpa* was 132 ft. in diameter. Around the base of the dome was provided an 8-ft. wide terrace on the top of the drum (148 ft. in diameter) which had four projected *āyaka*s with limestone *āyaka*-pillars facing, as usual, the four cardinal directions. The height of the drum was noted as 8 ft.<sup>37</sup> Around the base of the drum was a brick pavement, 8 ft. 4 in. wide, serving as the processional path. Edging the latter once stood a limestone railing, of which six fragmentary uncarved uprights were found *in situ*. The drum was panelled with oblong limestone slabs alternating with pilasters; the facing slabs of the *āyaka*s alone and pilasters are carved closely in the manner of the drum of Jaggayyapeta (p. 211). Rea found a portion of the facing brickwork of the dome still standing to a height of 5 ft. 6 in. and from the batter he concluded that the height of the dome was less than half its diameter. He further succeeded in recovering two pieces of a stone umbrella, ribbed inside, which evidently crowned the *stūpa*.

But his most outstanding discovery was three inscribed stone receptacles found near the central hole (stepped in the lower level with alternate diameters of 9½ in. and 1 ft. 3 in.) of the core, the tops of the receptacles being at the depths of 14 ft. 6 in. (the level of the top of the drum), 17 ft. and 18 ft. respectively below the ruined top of the *stūpa*.

Inside the topmost receptacle were found a globular black stone casket, copper bits including a ring, pearls, beads, a cup-shaped casket, an inscribed hexagonal crystal bead, gold flowers and two thin gold pieces relieved with *tri-ratnas*. The globular casket contained in its turn twenty-four silver coins, arranged in the shape of a *svastika*, gold and copper flowers, beads, pearls and a crystal reliquary containing a piece of bone of Buddha as attested by one of the inscriptions on the receptacle. The second receptacle produced a crystal casket and other precious objects including one hundred and sixty-four gold flowers and a rolled strip of silver inscribed with three lines of writings. The lowest receptacle yielded a crystal casket, a beryl reliquary with three pieces of bone inside and other objects like beads, pearls, gold flowers, etc.

The inscriptions record the names of a large number of individuals, belonging to different families and guilds, and a king called Kuberaka, who earned merit by sharing in the donation of the contents of the receptacles. It is, however, not known whether the same individuals contributed towards the raising of the *stūpa* as well. The inscriptions have been dated by some to about 200 B.C. (or even earlier) and by others to 100 B.C. or slightly earlier.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> According to the drawing of the section illustrated on pl. II (fig. 3) of the *South Indian Buddhist Antiquities* (Madras, 1894), the height is 5 ft.

<sup>38</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, II, pp. 323 ff.; D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, vol. I (Calcutta, 1965), pp. 224 and 225, fn. 3.



Two other mounds, locally called Chinna-laṅja-dibba and Vikramarkakoṭa-dibba and noticed by Rea, are now completely denuded.

#### H. GHANTASALA

Ghantasala (lat. 16° 8' N.; long. 80° 56' E.; District Krishna), a large flourishing village in Taluk Divi, was once a renowned Buddhist centre, teeming with monuments of great beauty. Its prosperity was mostly due to the sea-borne trade. Ptolemy (middle of the second century A.D.) made a specific mention of the emporium of Kontakossyla in the region of Maisolia (Masulipatam, which is only 13 miles from Ghantasala as the crow flies). A number of Roman gold coins and hundreds of copper and lead coins of the Sātavāhanas with the ship motif found here are now the only remnants left by the flood-tide of the Indo-Roman trade. Indeed, one of the inscriptions, in characters of the second century A.D., found here, records the gift of an *āyaka*-pillar by the wife of a *mahā-nāvika* (master-mariner).<sup>39</sup>

The Buddhists of this place had a close contact with other centres as well. Thus, we find not only the people of Kaṁṭakasola (Sanskrit Kaṇṭakasāila), ancient name of Ghantasala, making donations at places like Amaravati,<sup>40</sup> but also the famous *upāsikā* Bodhisiri, who left a record of her donations at Nagarjunakonda (p. 199), building a stone *maṇḍapa* at the eastern gate of the Mahāchaitya at Kaṁṭakasola.

Like most of the Buddhist centres in the lower Krishna valley, it, too, was subjected to large-scale pillage, so that the remains surviving now are only a small fraction of what once existed. Several limestone pillars of various sizes, bearing the characteristic decoration of the second-third century A.D., have been found at various parts of the village including the pastures (*ghoṭakam*) surrounding it. The existence of chases at their top suggests that they formed part of a number of structures, mostly *maṇḍapas*, either independent or parts of monasteries. One pasture, locally called Dharma-ghoṭakam, yielded a good number of antiquities (now in the local Rammohan Library), including a standing life-sized image of Buddha in the early Amaravati style, an inscribed lion (belonging to the *maṇḍapa* of Budhisiri) which most probably crowned the gate and a number of pillars, of which two are inscribed in ornamental Ikshvāku characters. They record the gift of a stone *maṇḍapa* with a *gandha-kuṭi*, a railing (*vedikā*) and a *torāṇa* at Ukhasirivadhamaṇa by the householder Budhisiri, a resident of Kaṁṭakasola.<sup>41</sup> Evidently, at this spot there existed a *maṇḍapa* and a shrine of Buddha. Similar pillars, but uninscribed, are now lying in a field, locally called Yennammappadu, associated with low mounds. Other localities like Ghoṭaka-malapalli and mounds like Koṭa-dibba yielded similar fragments, the latter having an inscribed one in pre-Ikshvāku characters.<sup>42</sup>

The mound (called Laṅja-dibba) containing the ruins of the Mahāchaitya was

<sup>39</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, XXVII (1947-48), p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Burgess, *The Buddhist Stupas of Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta* (London, 1987), p. 106, pl. LXI (54).

<sup>41</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, XXVII, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.



excavated by A. Rea. Like the *stūpas* of Nagarjunakonda, the internal construction of the dome is in the form of a wheel with two concentric circular walls, connected with each other by sixteen radial walls. The inner ring contains within it a network of cross walls around a central cube so that sixteen irregular cells are formed. These cells, together with the ones between the two rings, are packed with black mud. Around the dome, which is stated to be 111 ft. in diameter,<sup>42</sup> is a terrace (5 ft. 7 in. wide) laid over the drum which is 4 ft. 6 in. high. The drum has four *āyakas* (projections), each 17 ft. 6 in. by 5 ft. The processional path around the base of the drum is paved with bricks.

The *stūpa* is now bereft of its facing stones, but the few slabs, including a relief depicting the assault and temptation of Māra (photo 131), discovered by Rea are enough to show that it was once decorated lavishly in the manner of the Mahāchaitya of Amaravati. The recent find of a fragment of the coping carved with garland-bearing dwarfs from the site of the Mahāchaitya proves that the *stūpa* was once encircled by a railing of the most ornate pattern.

As at Bhattiprolu, there is a central hole with different sizes, starting from 3 ft. below the extant top and going down to the foundation, 26 ft. from the top. At the head of the shaft was found a broken pot, containing a small lead coin, beads and pieces of semiprecious stones. Immediately below this was a pot of red ware with a glazed pot inside. The latter contained two pieces of bone or coral (?), beads, pearls, crystal-pieces and two bits of gold leaf, one of which bears the representation of a flower.

### I. GUDIVADA

Gudivada (lat. 16° 25' N.; long. 80° 59' E.; District Krishna) is a Taluk headquarters and connected by train with Vijayawada. The *stūpa*, locally called Lañja-dibba, is of solid brickwork like that of Bhattiprolu; but its condition was found even worse, due to quarrying of bricks for road-making, by A. Rea when he first visited it. He laid three trenches at three different points, but did not succeed in making any plan mostly on account of the missing facing brickwork and partly due to the limited ground available for excavation, the mound being hemmed in on all sides either by roads or by houses. The ruins at that time stood to a maximum height of 11 ft. No trace of any casing-slabs was found.

During earlier demolition were found four stone receptacles, each containing a crystal casket, at four sides. These are now in the Government Museum, Madras.

The *stūpa*, now reduced to a low shapeless mound of bricks in the heart of the town, does not evince any interesting features.

### J. GUNTUPALLI

Guntupalli (lat. 17° 0' N.; long. 81° 8' E.; District West Godavari) is a village, 28 miles from the Ellore railway-station. The picturesque hill near the village, with its two

<sup>42</sup> A. Rea, *South Indian Buddhist Antiquities* (Madras, 1894), p. 2. From the details given on p. 32 the diameter comes to 115 ft. 6 in.



scarps projected in the form of a horseshoe overlooking a narrow ravine, bears a good crop of Buddhist remains, both structural and rock-cut.

Occupying a commanding position above the head of the ravine is a circular *chaitya-griha* (fig. 15, p. 46; photo 133), with an oblong projection towards the west which accommodates a narrow porch. Made of bricks, it stands to a height of nearly 8 ft. Mud mortar was used in the walls which were plastered both internally and externally. The walls present a *khurā*-shaped moulding at the base. The porch, 7 ft. 6 in.  $\times$  6 ft. 7 in. internally, leads to a narrow passage which gives access to the sanctum. Flanking the entrance of the passage is a brick-built pilaster against the two flanks of the back wall of the porch. The floor of the passage is higher than that of the sanctum. Externally, the base of the sanctum is 36 ft. in diameter, the thickness of the walls immediately above the ground-level being 7 ft. 6 in. In the middle of the sanctum is the object of worship in the form of a *stūpa*. The latter is veneered with stone slabs having fine joints, the core being of bricks and earth. The cylindrical drum, with a projected band at the base and a low parapet at the top, is 4 ft. 1 in. high. The ledge between the parapet and the dome, which is hemispherical, is only 8 in. wide. The circumambulatory path between the *stūpa* and the wall is 4 ft. 6 in. wide. Its floor is paved with stone slabs, set in lime mortar, and finished with lime plaster. Below the paved floor is a brick soling. The form of the *stūpa* suggests a pre-Christian origin of the *chaitya-griha*.

Edging the western face of the *stūpa* and facing the passage are three free-standing images of Buddha (photo 132), obviously installed at a later date. Made in the round, all of them stand in *sama-pāda* on their respective pedestals. Robed in a heavy lower cloth and a *saṅghāṭi* which leaves their right chest bare, all of them display *abhaya-mudrā*. A similar set of three images, also standing side by side, is found within the porch edging its southern wall. The heights of the images range from 2 ft. to 2 ft. 7 in.

The elevated terrace on which the *chaitya-griha* is located is approached from the west by a long flight of steps. On one of the steps was noticed an inscription (claimed to have been in characters of the second century B.C.) recording the gift of the steps by a female devotee.

In front of the flight of steps are more than thirty *stūpas* of varying sizes. Many of them are encased in stone slabs. One of these *stūpas* yielded a stone receptacle containing a copper vessel, a large crystal bead and a tiny gold bowl with two gold 'bead-like ornaments'. The clearance around the *stūpas* resulted in the discovery of monolithic portable *stūpas*, an image of Buddha, dislocated reliquaries and architectural fragments like coping and upright. This very terrace contains a cistern and a well.

Immediately to the west of the cluster of *stūpas* are the ruins of a pillared *mandapa*. The monolithic pillars are square below and above and octagonal in the middle with chamferings at the transitions between square and octagon, a characteristic feature of the second and first centuries B.C.

Immediately to the west of the *mandapa* is a conspicuous apsidal sanctuary, made of bricks. Above its moulded base is a recess with a *jālī*-pattern. The barrel-vaulted roof had a row of terracotta finials at the ridge. The entrance-door is flanked by a niche with an image of Buddha. The high pedestal in the apse possibly contained an image of Buddha.



Of greater interest, however, are the rock-cut caves in two distinct groups at two different heights. Their importance, however, is due more to the rarity of such architectural attempts in the south-eastern seaboard than their architectonic or artistic qualities. Bereft of sculptural decoration and haphazardly planned and executed, they are the expressions of a band of excavators, not very experienced in such types of work and as such bear poor comparison with the well-known specimens from the Deccan. In spite of this, the caves have a charm of their own in their austere simplicity and severity. They are further distinguished for their uncommon forms.

Time and elements have dealt severely with these caves, rock being particularly fragile and unsuitable for the purpose. The lower group,<sup>44</sup> perched on the west of the ravine, consisting of a *chaitya-griha* (photo 134) and four extant monasteries, all in a row overlooking a terrace, is better preserved. Fissures admitting percolation of rain-water into some of the cells of this group were most probably noticed shortly in the wake of the excavation; for, cut into the floors are drains, with shutter-grooves, to divert water outside.

The *vihāras* of this group are of small dimensions, mostly with three cells on three sides of a narrow lobby and often with a verandah in front. Their façades are particularly remarkable for horseshoe-shaped mouldings bordering a blind semicircular basket-pattern, in imitation of wooden fanlights or screens as in the *chaitya*-windows of western India, above the semicircular-arched doorways and oblong window-frames. The façades closely simulate the appearance of structural prototypes with barrel-vaulted roofs crowned by a row of finials at the ridge which were in vogue in those days, and of which we get profuse illustrations in the early reliefs of Bharhut, Sanchi, Amaravati, etc. The monasteries are mere dwelling apartments without any provision for a place of worship. The cells, each with a doorway having two wooden leaves, are narrow and have little amenities, though a few have windows. Besides these four sets, there was a fifth which had been entirely quarried away. Remains of unfinished cells are also there.

The architectural peculiarity of the circular *chaitya-griha* (fig. 14, p. 45; photo 134), the chief interest of this group, has already been described in details (p. 44). Occupying a large part of the chamber and leaving barely a margin of 3 ft. 2 in. all around for circumambulation is the object of worship—a plain monolithic *stūpa* consisting of a high battered drum and a hemispherical dome with an oblong socket at the crown for the insertion of the *chhatra-yashti*.

#### K. SANKARAM

One of the most remarkable groups of Buddhist remains was uncovered by A. Rea in 1907 on the twin hills, locally known as Bojjannakonda and Lingalakonda, near the village of Sankaram (lat. 17° 42' N.; long. 83° 2' E.; District Visakhapatnam), 2 miles to the north of the Anakapalli railway-station. The river Sarada, which formerly skirted the base of the hills, is now only a few miles away.

<sup>44</sup> R. Sewell noticed a two-lined inscription in characters of the first century A.D. or a little later on one of these caves; *J.R.A.S. of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1887, p. 511.



Bojjannakonda, the eastern one, is the richer of the two hills. It presents a picturesque appearance with its Main Stūpa (photo 135), impressive even in its present desolate and bare state, crowning the hill-top and dominating the myriads of *stūpas*, mostly rock-cut and rarely brick-built, which occur in overwhelming numbers in irregular groups on different terraces in tiers, one above the other. Almost every rocky outcrop and protuberance has been converted boldly into a *stūpa*, finished with plaster. Considerable variety—from a low hemisphere to a tall spire—is exhibited by these *stūpas*, which are, no doubt, the offerings of pious pilgrims. With the exception of the Main Stūpa which has a projection on the eastern side (the excavator found here traces of steps), none presents any projection, not to speak of the *āyaka*-platforms of the lower Krishna valley. The terrace above the drum is extremely narrow. The brick *stūpas* have a packing of earth inside the rings.

In fashioning the Main Stūpa the rock was roughly dressed into the required shape and then encased with brickwork. The *stūpa* consists of a platform, about 80 ft. square and 11 ft. 9 in. high, approached by a flight of steps, a cylindrical drum, 64 ft. 8 in. in diameter and 7 ft. 6 in. high, and a dome, 60 ft. 8 in. in diameter. The bed-rock of the dome exists to a height of 4 ft. 7 in., the remaining portion above this being entirely of brickwork.

Immediately to its east is the main shrine-cum-monastery. The apsidal shrine, together with the paved hall or courtyard in the front, two apsidal halls near the entrance and rows of cells on three sides and extending up to the halls, is located on the eastern end of the elevated rock-cut terrace, 11 ft. 9 in. above the lower terrace (the height corresponding to that of the platform of the Main Stūpa) and approached by a flight of steps. The floor of the apsidal portion of the shrine is raised 9 in. higher. On this floor rests a rectangular pedestal with a socket, presumably for an image (now missing). The entire complex is of brick, the outer brickwork of the shrine being moulded like that of the platform of the Main Stūpa, which is definitely post-Christian and may even be as late as the third century A.D.

Abutting against the vertical wall of the upper terrace is a row of cells, mostly residential, distributed on the south, east and north sides. Some of the cells have the original bed-rock as back- and partition-walls. Parallel to the north and east rows and separated by a passage with a covered drain is another continuous row of cells; all traces of the outer row of cells on the south side, if there had been any, have disappeared. A few of the cells yielded copper coins, mostly of the seventh century A.D., seals and inscribed stamps. The majority of the antiquities, including coins, seals, sealings, inscribed tablets, pots and various objects of utilitarian purpose, however, were found in the black earth and ashes dumped as refuse on the upper slopes immediately below the cells. One of these coins is a gold issue of the Gupta Emperor Samudragupta.

Four smaller shrines—three apsidal and one oblong with a frontal porch—may be seen near the north-eastern and south-eastern corners of the Main Stūpa.

Of the caves, excavated at different levels, four may be regarded as sanctuaries, three containing reliefs of Buddha and the fourth a rock-cut *stūpa*. Except the last, they possess little architectural pretension. The flat ceiling of the oblong *stūpa*-sanctuary rests on four rows of four pillars each, the votive *stūpa* occupying the central position within



the four central pillars. The ceiling has a network of rock-cut beams in imitation of wooden ones. All the pillars, except the central four, have square bases and shafts, first octagonal and next sixteen-sided, crowned by *ghaṭa*-shaped members and bracket-capitals. The façade of the cave is dominated by a relief of Buddha seated in *dhyāna-mudrā* within a *chaitya*-window motif above the architrave over the door. The cave immediately above the *stūpa*-cave is particularly rich in the reliefs of Buddha and elementary Bodhisattvas, carved on the walls of the sanctum and porch and on the façade. Of about the fourth-fifth century A.D., they, however, evince hardly any variety, the iconography being very simple. The enshrined reliefs of Buddha in other caves are all in *dhyāna-mudrā*.

Though the establishment had an early nucleus, its most flourishing period was the third and fourth centuries A.D. It continued its existence up to at least ninth century A.D., if not later, but it is little affected by the Vajrayāna form of Buddhism. The only detachable image found so far is that of Hārītī. The occurrence of two reliefs, one of Gaṇeśa and the other of a terrible form of Śiva, on the façade of one of the caves proves the appropriation of the site by the Śaivas.

Lingalakonda means the hill of *lingas*—popular imagination finding in the *stūpas* the semblances of *lingas*. The central portion of this hill is studded with numerous rock-cut *stūpas* in tiers, dominated by a row of seven *stūpas* standing on a common platform, the latter having the decoration characteristic of this site—sunken panels between pilasters with projected mouldings below and above.

The other objects of interest on this hill are the Main *Stūpa*, a rock-cut cell with a verandah immediately on its east and a rock-cut oblong sanctuary with a votive *stūpa* in the centre. The Main *Stūpa* is fashioned mostly out of the live rock and only one-eighth part of the dome was of brick where the rock fell short of the requirements. Its slightly battered drum has neither a platform below it, nor any projection at cardinal points.

#### L. RAMATIRTHAM

Ramatirtham (lat. 18° 10' N.; long. 83° 30' E.; District Visakhapatnam) is about 10 miles north-east of Vizianagram. To the north of the village rises a chain of high hills, one of which, locally known as Gurubhaktakonda, has yielded a rich crop of Buddhist edifices at the spade of A. Rea in the first decade of the present century.

Nestled on a ledge, about 500 ft. high from the base, at the protective shadow of a vertical cliff of bare solid rock on the south side with the deep ravine on the north, the establishment shone in the rocky and wild magnificence (photo 136), completely isolated from the maddening crowd of the plains. The layout of the structures was dictated by the narrow width of the ledge which hardly permits two large-sized structures stand side by side; consequently, they were oriented almost in a line from west to east. Notwithstanding the inexhaustible supply of stones and dearth of good clay near by, the community made a sparse use of stone in pillars and steps alone, all their buildings being constructed with baked bricks.

At the west end was built the Main *Stūpa*, 65 ft. in diameter, of which the base



alone survives. To its south near the foot of the cliff is a tank, fed by the drips of water which trickle down from the rock overhead.

To the east of the Main Stūpa is a higher terrace, made of a mass of rocky boulders, with rows of brick monastic cells on the north and south sides at the base and the ruins of an imposing plastered apsidal hall at the eastern half of its top. The latter, with the brickwork moulded near the exterior base, has internally a wall, pierced by a central doorway, across the chord of the apse. The apse contained a small brick stūpa, faced with stone slabs; the latter yielded a relic-casket. A staircase with a post at the lowest extremity of the side-parapets and a moonstone at the base, so common at Nagarjuna-konda, gives access to the *chaitya-griha* which faces east.

Immediately to the east of the staircase leading to the lower terrace is a ruined hall (*mandapa*), with monolithic pillars, the latter square below and above and octagonal in the middle.

Beyond this *mandapa* and at different heights exist, in an irregular line, the extensive remains of a series of four *chaitya-grihas*, all apsidal on plan and facing east. The votive stūpa inside two of them partly survives. One of these sanctuaries has an apsidal platform around it.

To the north of these *chaitya-grihas* and bordering the edge of the ledge, the outer face of which is strengthened with a retaining wall of boulders, are two monasteries, each a long row of cells running from west to east and facing south. The doorways of the cells are flanked by pilasters with *ghaṭa*-bases above stepped pedestals. The higher monastery has twenty-four cells and a running verandah. Besides these, there are some smaller structures, including a few stūpas. Foundations of some other buildings were unearthed at a level below the ledge.

Noteworthy among the finds are a stone image of standing Buddha, with flowing robes, of the Amaravati style, a lead Sātavāhana coin and six clay sealings. One of the sealings bears the legend 'Siri S[i]vama[ka?]-vijayarāja-selasaghasa' (i.e. the Śailasaṅgha) in characters of about the second century A.D. The establishment, therefore, was already in existence during the later Sātavāhana period.

Remains of several Buddhist structures, including a brick stūpa and an apsidal *chaitya-griha*, exist on the adjoining hill, called Durgakonda as well. Both on this hill and also on the Gurubhaktakonda have been discovered some images of the Jaina Tirthaṅkaras of about the eighth or ninth century A.D., when the Buddhist occupation had most probably ceased to exist in this centre.

#### M. SALIHUNDAM

Picturesquely situated on the top of a hill overlooking the Vamsadhara, which meets the sea 5 miles further down at Kalingapatnam, the monuments of Salihundam (ancient Sālipetaka; lat. 18° 20' N.; long. 84° 3' E.; District Srikakulam), form an imposing landmark for miles around. The earliest stone inscription, discovered here, belongs to about the second century A.D. and reads *dharmarāja Aśokasirine*. From the epithet *dharmarāja*, one is tempted to find an allusion to some work of the Maurya Emperor Aśoka. No



remains, however, can definitely be ascribed to the Maurya Emperor. Unlike most of the Andhra sites, Salihundam had a prolonged existence and was in its later days greatly influenced by the Vajrayāna doctrine, possibly an infiltration from Orissa. Several images, like a six-armed figure of Mārīchī, a four-armed figure of Bhṛikuṭī and two-armed figures of Tārā and Mañjuśrī, now lying in the village, bear out the influence of the Orissan art and iconography.

As one gets up from the east to the crown of the hill, one comes across, beyond a few structural *stūpas*, a gateway giving access to a rubble-paved ramp, at the end of which is a circular sanctuary right on the crest of the hill. Many stones of this ramp are inscribed with short pilgrim-records, in ornamental shell-characters.

On both sides of the ramp are clusters of structures—sanctuaries, apsidal, circular and oblong, *stūpas* and pillared *mandapas*. Among these, the two apsidal sanctuaries, immediately after the gate, are specially conspicuous on account of their imposing appearance. The one on the south side of the ramp contains a seated image of Buddha, made of bricks finished with stucco, installed on a semicircular moulded platform and that on the north a stone-cased *stūpa* with a brick core. The exterior walls have mouldings at the base. Higher up, to the north of the ramp are several *stūpas* including an eight-spoked one and a circular *stūpa*-sanctuary with an oblong passage or porch (photo 137). One of these *stūpas* is particularly significant, as it yielded four silver caskets, within terracotta receptacles; it is a stone-faced *stūpa* with a brick core.

The most important edifice, however, is the circular *stūpa*-sanctuary fronted by oblong porch built on the highest terrace, the latter artificially raised in most parts by the filling of rubble and faced with brickwork. Its internal diameter is 23 ft., and its wall is about 15 ft. thick. The *stūpa*, which was faced with limestone slabs, is no longer extant. The original plaster still survives at places.

Immediately to the west of the sanctuary is the Main Stūpa, made of wedge-shaped bricks around a central hollow shaft, which now stands to the maximum height of 2 ft. 2 in. Its stone-faced base survives partly. The *stūpa* yielded three stone caskets, each containing a crystal reliquary with gold flowers.

In the scanty remains of the monasteries, mostly concentrated near the bank of the river, one fails to notice any compact and co-ordinated plan in the arrangement of cells.



## 11. ORISSA

Orissa, though not visited by Buddha, played a significant part in the development of Buddhism and nourished the faith long after the Muslim conquest of India. Particularly overwhelming were her contributions towards Vajrayāna and its offshoot Kālachakrayāna and their varied iconography.

Notwithstanding the conversion of Trapusha and Bhallika as the first lay devotees of Buddha (p. 3), Kalinga, which comprised large parts of the present Orissa, did not seem to have been much affected by Buddhism in the beginning. The religion most probably stepped in this land with Aśoka's conquest of Kalinga, which itself was an important event ushering in a radical transformation in the Emperor's career (p. 9). Two versions of his Major Rock-Edicts exist at Dhauḷi (District Puri) near Bhubaneswar and Jaugada (District Ganjam). Above the inscribed part of the rock at Dhauḷi is the rock-cut forepart of an elephant which perhaps theriomorphically represents Buddha, the 'best of elephants' (*gajātama*).

For a few centuries Buddhism could not make much headway due partly to the popularity of Jainism which received the royal support of the powerful Mahāmeghavāhanas (first century B.C. and A.D.). But gradually its tenets drew people close to it. One of the important Mahāyāna centres that grew up by the sixth century A.D. was near Jayarampur (District Balasore). A mound of this village yielded a copper-plate charter of the time of Gopachandra (*circa* first half of the sixth century A.D.). The charter records the grant of a village for establishing a *vihāra* at Bodhipadraka, where presided the god Ārya-Avalokiteśvara, for the provisions of the ceremonial worship of the same god and also for meeting the necessities of the monks.

When Hiuen Tsang visited Wu-t'u he found Buddhism in a very flourishing condition with more than hundred monasteries humming with the activities of myriads of monks.<sup>1</sup> Among the establishments he made a special mention of the hill-monastery of Pushpagiri, doubtfully identified with one or the other of the two contiguous hills of Lalitagiri and Udayagiri near Ratnagiri (pp. 225 ff.), all in the District of Cuttack. He also noticed more than ten Aśokan *stūpas* within the country.

The roaring prosperity of the religion, however, reached its peak during the long rule of the Bhauma-Karas, many of whom were devout worshippers of Sugata. In A.D. 795, one of the Buddhist kings of Wu-ch'a (Udra=Orissa), who is generally taken as a scion of this dynasty, presented an autographed manuscript of the Mahāyāna text *Gaṇḍavyūha* to the Chinese Emperor Te-tsung.<sup>2</sup> These rulers actively participated in the furtherance of the faith. They not only constructed sumptuous monasteries and other Buddhist structures, but granted villages for the ritualistic worship of the images of Buddha, maintenance of the monks and repairs of the buildings. Two charters of

<sup>1</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, XV (1919-20), pp. 363 and 364.



✓ Śivakaradeva III of this dynasty, found at Talcher, record the grant of two villages to meet the requirements of the temple of Buddha in the Jayāśrama-vihāra.<sup>3</sup>

The religion maintained its hold even after the fall of this dynasty in about the tenth century A.D., as the new rulers, Somavarṃśis, though not Buddhists, were not inimical to it. The comparative immunity from Muslim inroads made Orissa a refuge of the fleeing monks of the northern and eastern India. Buddhism, thus, lingered as a sort of fugitive faith at least up to the sixteenth century. The last king to take some interest in the cause of the faith was, according to the statement of Tāranātha, Mukunda-deva (A.D. 1559-68) who revived the religion, after it had suffered reverses at the hands of the Gajapati king Pratāparudradeva (circa A.D. 1497-1540), by building a few Buddhist temples and monasteries in Oḍiṣā.

In course of her long career Orissa, with its innate artistic impulse, gave a great impetus to the artistic and architectural pursuits of the Buddhists. The entire land is dotted with the images of Buddha and divinities of the Buddhist pantheon. The number of stray images all over the State is indeed overwhelming.

Particularly noteworthy among the sites containing extensive remains of Buddhist establishments, indicated by mounds of brick-bats and stones and images, and still awaiting the spade of archaeologists, are Lalitagiri, Udayagiri, Kundeswar, Vajragiri and Baneshwarnasi, all in District Cuttack, Baudh town (where a monastery with a stone image of Buddha in the chapel has partly been exposed and two bronze images have been found) in District Phulbani, Khiching (District Mayurbhanj, pp. 232 f.) and Khadipada, Solampur and Ayodhya in District Balasore. Some of the finest sculptures from a few of these places and also from Chauduar (District Cuttack) have already enriched the Indian Museum of Calcutta and the State Museums of Patna and Bhubaneswar. But there are still many images even now lying at the sites.

Some of the images of Lalitagiri bear the stamp of the late Gupta tradition, though the majority of the sculptures of this centre and the neighbouring Udayagiri belonged to the ninth and tenth centuries A.D., when they were already strongholds of Vajrayāna. Buddhist remains, covered under the shroud of débris, at these two sites are not only imposing but very extensive. Amidst the ruins of Udayagiri, a large brick *stūpa* with images of Buddha fixed to its walls and a spacious and well-decorated monastery with an image of Buddha in its chapel can easily be located. The exquisitely-carved door-frame and the images of Gaṅgā (both now in the Patna Museum) and Yamunā possibly belonged to this very monastery. This hill is further distinguished for its rock-cut images and a large stepped well (*vāpī*), also rock-cut. Far more impressive are the mounds at Lalitagiri, spread over an overwhelmingly-extensive area. Apart from the images, there are monolithic *stūpas*, a beautifully-carved door-frame, presumably of a monastery, and some ruined brick and stone *stūpas* visible above ground.

The mounds of Solampur, on the Baitarani opposite Jajpur, are also fairly extensive. They possibly contain the remains of the establishment of the ancient Saloṇapura-mahāvihāra mentioned in the Ratnagiri copper-plate of the Somavarṃśi king Karṇa

<sup>3</sup> B. Misra, *Orissa under the Bhauma Kings* (Calcutta, 1934), pp. 40-51.



(p. 232). As many as twenty-five Buddhist sculptures, some with inscriptions, are now in the village which itself is located on the mounds.

Ayodhya is particularly rich in Buddhist sculptures which have been laid bare during sporadic diggings by the villagers. Some of the images of this centre are remarkable for their sculptural qualities.

Among the denuded sites Achutrajpur, close to the Banpur police-station (District Puri) deserves particular mention, as it has yielded the richest hoard of bronze images in Orissa. The site has been practically levelled down in 1963 for the purpose of a college-building, and the brick structures of the ancient Buddhist establishment have been destroyed ruthlessly for the building materials. The process of denudation started much earlier than the recent clearance, as the local Bālukeśvara temple, which is more than a century old and located on a mound, was built with the materials of the ancient Buddhist structures. Indeed, in two of the niches of the *pārśva-devatās* of this temple are Buddhist images, one representing the two-armed Tārā in *lalitāsana* and the other standing Buddha in *vara-mudrā*. Near the base of the stair of this temple are four monolithic votive *stūpas*, one with a relief of Tārā. A stone image of Tārā, found about twenty-five years back, is now kept on the verandah of the local Godabarisha Vidyapitha.

The clearance of 1963 yielded a khondalite life-sized head of Buddha, a large stone pedestal, a relief of a *stūpa*, fragments of sculptures, architectural slabs (both carved and uncarved) and a gold-plated spouted pot. But the most outstanding discovery at Achutrajpur was three earthen pots. Inside these pots, which were found together, were encountered hoards of bronze figures, seventeen bronze *stūpas*, a bronze bell, a copper or bronze spouted pot, an iron dagger and a conch. By the side of these pots there was a deposit of seven more bronze images and two *stūpas* of larger dimensions. The total number of bronze figures is ninety-five, of which at least seventy-five are Buddhist, five Brahmanical and eight Jaina. The age of many of the Buddhist figures can be determined after cleaning, as they bear an inscribed disc which is illegible due to corrosion. Some of these images bear the Buddhist creed in characters of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries A.D. These bronzes are interesting not only for their artistic qualities, but also from the iconographical point of view. Besides Buddha, there were more than a dozen Buddhist deities, some presenting features not found in the available published texts. The presence of deities like Vajrasattva and Heruka indicates that the Vajrayāna form of Buddhism flourished in this establishment to an appreciable extent. From the Banpur copper-plates of the Somavamśi king Indraratha (first half of the eleventh century A.D.), it appears that Khadiravaṇī (Tārā) had an honoured place in this centre.

Alagataru-Tārā, Alagachchhatra-chaitya and Kūrma-stūpa of Odradeśa are illustrated on the Cambridge University Library manuscript (no. Add. 1643) of A.D. 1015.

#### A. RATNAGIRI

Ratnagiri (lat. 20° 38' N.; long. 86° 20' E.; District Cuttack) on the bank of the stream Keluo is a hillock between the Brahmani and the Birupa, not far from their



confluence. It is approachable from Cuttack, which is about 32 miles (as the crow flies) to the south-west, by the Patamundai Canal embankment.

Recent excavations on the top of the hillock brought to light imposing remains of one of the most important Buddhist establishments, reclaimed as the Ratnagiri-mahāvihāra (and not Pushpagiri-vihāra as presumed by some) on the basis of a number of sealings bearing the legend *Śrī-Ratnagiri-mahāvihāriy-āryabhikṣu-saṅghasya*. With its nucleus dating at least from about the fifth century A.D., the establishment witnessed a phenomenal growth in religion, art and architecture till the twelfth century A.D. It played a significant role in disseminating Buddhist culture and religion by forming itself, like Nālandā, an important religious and philosophical academy, to which flocked the entrants and scholars to take lessons from the intellectual stalwarts of Buddhism. By the end of the thirteenth century, the building activities suffered a sharp setback, presumably as a repercussion of the disastrous inroads of Muslim invaders in large parts of India, though there is no evidence of its having been directly hit by the fury of the new conquerors. The general picture that emerges afterwards was one of decadence in every respect. However, though no longer in an affluent state, the Buddhists continued to maintain themselves for a few centuries more and strove with their meagre resources to sustain the dying flame of the faith till about the sixteenth century.

Like many other centres, its name, too, completely slipped from the memory of the people of India. The Buddhist association of the hill was even forgotten, and the mounds came to be believed to contain the palace-complex of a mythical king. The only extant temple (p. 55; photo 57) was appropriated by the Brahmanical Hindus who identified the enshrined image of the Buddhist god Mahākāla with his Brahmanical namesake.

Fortunately, its memory, though sketchy, is perpetuated in a few late Tibetan texts. Thus, Tāranātha in his *History of Buddhism in India* (completed in A.D. 1608) says that a *vihāra*, called Ratnagiri, was built on the crest of a mountain in the kingdom of Oḍiśā (Orissa) in the reign of Buddhapakṣa (identified with the Gupta Emperor Narasimhagupta Bālāditya of the Gupta dynasty by N. Dutt), and in this *vihāra* were kept three sets of Mahāyāna and Hinayāna *sāstras*, etc., and there were eight great groups of *dharma* (religious schools?) and five hundred monks. According to the *Pag Sam Jon Zang* (completed in A.D. 1747), Āchārya Bitoba went through magic to Śambhala where he obtained the *Kālachakra-tantra*, brought it to Ratnagiri and explained the doctrine to Abodhutipa, Bodhiśrī and Nāropa. This and other Tibetan references indicate that Ratnagiri was a renowned centre, noted for the spiritual inspiration and lively pursuit of the *Kālachakra-tantra* in the latter part of the tenth century A.D. The importance of this institution, which played a great role in the dissemination of the *Kālachakrayāna*, may be gathered from its association with a celebrated savant like Nāropa.

The veracity of these late Tibetan works, which is often questioned, is amply borne out by the excavated remains which are spectacular even in their ruins. The excavations laid bare the remains of an imposing *stūpa* (Main *Stūpa*), rebuilt at least once, two magnificent quadrangular monasteries (Monasteries 1 and 2), also rebuilt more than once, a single-winged monastery, eight temples, a large number of small *stūpas*, sculptures and



architectural pieces, objects of daily use and hundreds of other evidences of what life was like in these sumptuous monasteries. Indeed, these excavations have revealed that here was an establishment that can be compared with that of Nālandā. In the overwhelming number of portable monolithic *stūpas* Ratnagiri can compete even with Bodh-Gaya. Many of them bear the reliefs of divinities of the Vajrayāna pantheon. The number of these antiquities is an adequate index of the profound popularity and sanctity of this centre in the Buddhist world.

As in most centres, originally there were two separate units, one representing the objects of worship, i.e. *stūpas*, and the other residences of monks, i.e. monasteries. But in course of time both the complexes became connected by scores of *stūpas* and temples that cropped up between them.

The principal object of worship was an impressive *stūpa* (Main *Stūpa*), sited on the highest eminence of the hillock near its south-western corner. Its entire superstructure over the solid podium or base, except a few courses of the circular drum, is now missing. The lofty podium, about 14 ft. high, is of exceptionally fine brickwork finished with a plaster of shell-lime. Rising above a *tri-ratha upāna*, the podium is also *tri-ratha* on plan. Each *ratha* has two divisions so that there are six vertical projections on each of the four sides (47 ft. long). Flanked by facet-like *upa-pagas*, the projections are separated from one another by recesses. The projections are boldly relieved with horizontal mouldings, the bottom one being a high *khurā*. These mouldings consist of receding and projecting courses of chiselled and rubbed bricks, sometimes chamfered and curbed, which, together with vertical facets, produces a delightful effect of light and shade. The inner construction of the drum above the podium was in the form of a wheel with a central solid hub, twelve spokes and an outer rim. The interspaces between the spokes were filled in with earth. This *stūpa*, which was prior to the ninth century A.D., was built over the ruined plinth of an earlier edifice which might have gone back to the Gupta period, to which period belonged a few dislocated slabs inscribed with the Buddhist text *Pratitya-samutpāda-sūtra*, found near by.

When the upper part of the Main *Stūpa* and top edges of the podium had collapsed and the lower portion of the podium had been engulfed by a thick shroud of debris, the *stūpa* underwent restoration which altered its plan: instead of a polygonal base, it then assumed a circular plan from its very bottom. This was effected by covering the available part with the construction of two concentric circular walls at two different levels. The lower wall, which was vertical and formed the drum, was built mostly on the accumulation of debris and partly on the ruined corner projections of the early podium. The intervening space between this wall and the facing of the podium was filled in with earth and brick-bats. The space on the top of the wall was utilized as a *pradakṣiṇa-patha* (approached by steps) around the base of the upper wall which formed the casing of the dome. Both these walls were miserably constructed with bricks and brick-bats collected from the fallen material of the decayed *stūpa*. The joints were wide and mortar was coarse-grained earth. Simultaneously, a quadrilateral compound-wall was erected to enclose a wide area round the renovated *stūpa*. The area between the *stūpa* and the compound-wall was levelled. At this time the minor *stūpas*, which had cropped up around



the Main Stūpa, were either ruined or buried under the débris of structural stūpas. This renovation took place at the fag-end of the career of this Buddhist establishment, long after the thirteenth century A.D.

To the east of the Main Stūpa is Stūpa 2, reduced to its *tri-ratha* base, each side measuring 32 ft. 9 in. The extant height of the base, above the *upāna*, is 7 ft. 7 in. The façades are moulded. In the core of the solid brickwork are extant three oblong chambers, one of which yielded five terracotta plaques inscribed with *dhāraṇīs*.

The precincts of the Main Stūpa are literally studded with smaller stūpas of varying dimensions and base-forms, which are circular, octagonal, square and square with central projections with or without horizontal mouldings. Though the monolithic stūpas by far outnumber the structural stūpas, the number of the latter, which are built either of brick or of khondalite, is quite considerable.

Some of the stūpas of the stonework have upon them various decorations in relief, a prominent motif being a row of *vajras*. Several of the stūpas have, on one or all the four faces of the drums, niches with images, in chlorite or khondalite, of Buddha, Dhyaṇi-Buddhas, Tārā, Lokēśvara and sometimes deities of the Vajrayāna pantheon like Aparājita and Vajra-Tārā. The deposits within the structural stūpas are both varied and interesting. Some of the stūpas are *śārīrika*, as they yielded charred bones. The bones in some cases were accompanied by other deposits like beads and gold Gaṅga *fanam*. The second category of deposits consists of stone slabs and terracotta plaques and tablets inscribed with the Buddhist creed, *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra* and *dhāraṇīs*. The Buddhist resorted to the enshrinement of the *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra* and Buddhist creed, as they contain the very essence of Buddha's teachings. The deposit of smallim ages within stūpas is also attested. Thus, inside Stūpa 55, which presents an image of Tārā in the niche of the drum-façade, were found, in three different layers, three deposits—two bronze images of Jambhala and Maitreya, a circular slab inscribed with the Buddhist creed and a soap-stone image of Lokēśvara.

On the south-western side of the Main Stūpa were exposed hundreds of portable monolithic stūpas, often carved with the figures of the divinities of the Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna pantheon. No doubt, they were the dedications of devout pilgrims.

A fairly large number of sculptures and stone and terracotta plaques bearing *dhāraṇīs*, the Buddhist creed and *Pratītya-samutpāda-sūtra*, both indicative of the Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna affiliation of the establishment, were found in the débris around the Main Stūpa. The former must have got detached from the niches of the smaller stūpas and the latter from the decayed cores of such stūpas where they had been enshrined.

The mound to the north of the Main Stūpa, locally known as Rāñī-pukhuri ('Queen's tank'), yielded two full-fledged monasteries. Lying side by side, with a narrow alley in between, both face the Main Stūpa. The eastern one, Monastery 1 (photo 138), is the larger of the two. The basic plan of this monastery is the age-old *chatur-sālā* type, as it consists of a spacious stone-paved courtyard, around the four sides of which runs a pillared verandah, which in turn is surrounded by twenty-four cells, a shrine fronted by a pillared antechamber and an entrance-complex. The last includes a front porch and a rear porch, the latter opening into the verandah. The monastery had an upper storey, admittance



to which was gained by a grand stone staircase in the south-western corner. Notwithstanding its normal monastic plan, it is a singular structural monument not only for its impressive size and symmetrical planning but for the rich, yet balanced, surface-treatment of the front porch and façade of the shrine. With its architectural grandeur, effective composition and splendid array of sculptures and delicate and admirably-finished decorative patterns, it impresses one as a great monument.

Built in about the seventh-eighth century A.D., Monastery 1 is 180 ft. by 181 ft. 6 in. with an additional *pañcha-ratha* projection at the front to provide for the entrance-complex and a projection at the back of the shrine. Approached from the stone-paved forecourt by a stone staircase, the entrance-complex consists of a front porch flanked by a massive pylon of brickwork on either side and a rear porch, the two pillared porches being connected by a door, the principal entrance to the interior. Stone-faced side walls of the front porch are graced by the beautiful figures of Vajrapāṇi and Padmapāṇi standing within niches. Similar front porches exist in many other places including Nālandā. But nowhere else the surface-treatment of its back wall is so lavish and so pleasing. Indeed, this wall, with an admirable exuberance of sculptured figures and decorative patterns, presents a rare texture which is yet unparalleled in the structural monasteries in India. The exquisitely-carved chlorite door-frame with Gaja-Lakshmi on the lintel and bands of floral motifs and creepers of exceptionally neat workmanship on the jambs is the most splendid of its kind (photo 139). The brick-built east and west walls of the rear porch contain respectively a chlorite figure of Hārīti and a khondalite figure of Pāñchika, both seated in the niche of a *muṇḍi*.

The stone façade of the shrine, which is the central cell of the northern flank facing the rear-porch, is also lavishly carved with a variety of creeper-patterns and figures of door-keepers, Bodhisattvas, *chāmara*-bearers, *nāgas*, etc. Within the shrine, on a spacious pedestal is installed a large seated image of Buddha, with a serene contemplative expression, in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*. The image is flanked by the standing figures of Padmapāṇi and Vajrapāṇi holding *chāmaras*. Two secret chambers are provided in the thickness of the brick-built east and west walls of the shrine.

The roof (missing) of the verandah, 9 ft. wide, rested on sixty khondalite pillars placed on a raised stone kerb which separates the verandah from the courtyard. The vast courtyard, 88 ft. 8 in. square, is paved with flagstones. It slopes sharply towards the north-east corner where there is a small washing-place enclosed by a dwarf wall. From this corner starts a khondalite drain which runs below the eastern kerb, floor of the verandah and Cell 11 and carries off water outside the monastery. There is a stone screen at the mouth of the drain.

Among the cells, which were of bricks except for the stone door-frames, Cell 17 was later on converted into the strong-room of the monastery. This particular cell yielded the richest hoard of small antiquities like bronze images, *stūpas* and *chhatras*, myriads of clay sealings of diverse shapes, sizes and legends and two iron daggers. The presence of these weapons among a community whose motto was *ahimsā* is rather intriguing. The ceilings of the cells of the lower storey were flat and rested on wooden beams. By the side of the staircase and at the western end of the southern flank of the verandah was a door leading to the alley between this monastery and Monastery 2.



When this monastery fell into decay, a complete overhauling, planned also on a magnificent scale, took place some time after the eleventh century A.D. The decayed peripheral walls, which were originally of brickwork, were reconstructed with a stone facing. All the cells of the ground-floor, except three, were filled in, after bricking up the door-openings, with debris and refuse-dump, and above them were built the cells of the reconstructed monastery. In this filling lay a good number of the sealings of the Ratnagiri-mahāvihāra. The earlier shrine, courtyard, verandah, staircase and the porches at the front and back of the entrance-doorway remained in use in this period as well. But a new front wall of stonework was provided covering the earlier façade of the shrine. The new façade was also lavishly carved, but the embellishment fell short of the standard achieved by the earlier builders. Erotic figures were introduced on the façade of the sanctuary of the one who rose above the world of passion. At a later stage a new antechamber was provided in front of this façade. In the niches of its brick walls were placed several images (photo 27) of varying dates. A screen-wall was added to the front porch which was originally open on the south. The subsidiary door facing Monastery 2 was blocked with stonework.

The last period of Monastery 1, pronouncedly one of utter decline, is mostly represented by several shabby brick walls enclosing parts of the northern, western and eastern wings of the verandah to provide rooms. The western part of the southern wing of the verandah and the courtyard were alone left free, the former to give access to the staircase and the latter to the shrine. The remaining open parts of the verandah were utilized as mortar-pits by the construction of dwarf walls. Huge piles of shells, for plaster-work, were found in one of these rooms and Cell 4 and also on the verandah and courtyard, where lay neatly stacked a heap of terracotta tiles. Evidently, the residents made an attempt, with their meagre resources, to repair the monastery but could not achieve it for some difficulty.

The plan of Monastery 2, consisting of a central paved courtyard flanked by a pillared verandah around which are arrayed eighteen cells, a shrine, entrance-porches with a carved door-frame, and a front platform approached by a staircase, is analogous to that of Monastery 1. But it is on a smaller scale and single-storeyed. The building proper, not taking into account the central projections on the exterior faces of peripheral walls, is about 95 ft. square externally. The construction is essentially of bricks, the use of khondalite being restricted to the door-frames, windows, kerb of the verandah, pillars, pilasters, pavement of the courtyard and the floors of the shrine and a cell. The base of the outer faces is decorated with stepped insets, made of projecting bricks, at regular intervals. The cells are small, and their ceilings are spanned by arches. The bricks of the arches, like those of the extant arches of the ceilings of the passages of two of the cells of Monastery 1 of Period II, are specially cut to obtain curvature required for the lowest course of the ceilings. A unique feature of some of the cells is the provision of a loft with a higher floor and an arched ceiling. Each loft is lighted by a balustraded stone window of a pleasing design; from below the sills of the windows of the east flank project stone channels for draining out water into the alley between the two monasteries. The stone-paved shrine, facing the entrance-gate, contains a standing khondalite image of Buddha in *vara-mudrā*, flanked by smaller images of Lokanātha and Śhaḍaksharī Lokeśvara.



Monastery 2 was later than the first period of Monastery 1, but earlier than the second period of the latter. This monastery was found to have been built immediately on the ruined walls of an earlier monastery of an almost identical plan. The latter was not later than the seventh century A.D. The singular feature of this earlier monastery is the existence of a brick-built bed in the cells. This bed has one of its ends raised and sloping to serve the purpose of a pillow. A secret underground chamber was built below the stone-paved floor of a cell, and access to it was provided by a few steps descending down from an opening in the adjoining cell. The secret chamber contained a few bronze objects including two images.

Below the south wing and verandah of this earlier monastery lay, in a slightly different alignment, a still earlier monastery, of which only one wing with scanty remains of a few cells was alone traced.

As already noted, remains of eight temples, all of bricks, were found in the excavations. None of them preserve their upper portions. Three of them stand side by side along the edge of the hill near the south-eastern corner of Monastery 1. Of these, the *deuls* of two, to judge by the extant portions and the dismembered bricks, were of the usual Orissan *rekha* order except for the finial which was most probably in the form of a *stūpa*. Built on a high *upāna*, both had a squarish *jagamohana* attached to the front wall of the *deul*. The latter is *sapta-ratha* on plan. The available portion of the *pābhāga* is moulded in the typical Orissan style. These temples are not earlier than the tenth century A.D. and might have been even later. They decayed even in the lifetime of the establishment.

There are three temples exposed in the area in front of Monastery 2. One of them is a cell-like shrine, around which is an ambulatory or a narrow court surrounded by an enclosure. It enshrines a fine khondalite two-armed image of Mañjuśrī standing on a pedestal. The image, to judge by the palaeography of the inscribed Buddhist creed, belongs to the ninth century A.D. The second temple, of about the tenth century A.D., is a small sanctuary, *tri-ratha* on plan. The lower part of the three *rāhās* is moulded into *khurā* and inverted *khurā* with a recess in between, while the front *rāhā*, which is mostly of stonework, presents two pilasters. In the recesses of the three walls of the sanctum are firmly affixed three stone images—Vajrarāga, Vajradharma or Rakta-Lokeśvara and Vajrasattva, the first two of exquisite workmanship. The third temple, consisting of a *tri-ratha* porch and a *pañcha-ratha* sanctum, is reduced to its floor. These three temples are surrounded by one hundred and twenty-five *stūpas*, many more being still buried below the ground. With a few exceptions, which are of bricks, all are of khondalite, some being monolithic. The stone *stūpas* are invariably small, though some are beautifully decorated. Three of these *stūpas* with staircases carved in the central part of the four sloping sides of the base bespeak extraneous impact. The drums of all the three present four niches, the available images in them being Dhyāni-Buddhas. Two of them have pilasters between niches.

The largest of the brick *stūpas* in this area had originally in the niches of the moulded drum four Dhyāni-Buddhas facing the cardinal directions. Built on a low *upāna*, the base, *tri-ratha* on plan, is moulded into *khurā*, *noli* and *paṭā*.

The remaining two temples are in the area round the Main Stūpa. Both of them are



in the last stage of decay and do not furnish complete plans. One of them preserves by its side a beautiful khondalite four-armed image (3 ft. 11 in. high) of Lokeśvara seated in *lalitāsana*. On the back side of the image are the Buddhist creed and a short *dhāraṇī* inscribed in characters of the ninth or tenth century A.D.

The plan of the single-winged monastery recalls that of the brick structure called Itāmunḍiā (p. 233) at Khiching. Fronted by a running verandah, it consists of a row of three brick cells. The central cell possibly served as a private chapel and the flanking cells were used for habitational purposes. The ceilings were spanned, as in the cells of Monastery 2 of Period III and passages of Cells 4 and 11 of Monastery 1 of Period II, by semicircular arches. This monastery was built on the ruined walls of an earlier monastery, also of three brick cells opening into a common verandah. The mound, long before its excavation, yielded a charter of three copper-plates of the Somavamśi king Karna (end of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth century A.D.). The charter records the grant of a village to Rāṇi Karpūrasī who hailed from the Saloṇapura-mahāvihāra, the site of which is probably represented by Solampur (p. 224) near Jajpur (13 miles from Ratnagiri). The find of the copper-plates at this mound may suggest that Karpūrasī passed her retired life at Ratnagiri, possibly in this very structure, a secluded one, farthest from the establishment.

The excavations also unearthed a large number of antiquities. Particularly noteworthy among them are bronze objects including images of Buddha, both standing and seated, Lokeśvara, Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, Yamāri, Tārā and Jambhala, *stūpas*, *chhatras*, a female devotee and decorative pieces inlaid with stones. The other important finds comprise stone images of Buddha (photo 27) and Dhyāni-Buddhas and a host of divinities of the Buddhist pantheon like Lokeśvara, Padmapāṇi, Vajrapāṇi, Mañjuśrī, Vajrarāga, Jambhala, Heruka, Sambara (photo 33), Hārītī, various forms of Tārā, Vasudhārā, Ārya-Sarasvatī and Aparājītā. With different degrees of artistic value, they belong to different periods and evince divergent styles.

## B. KHICHING

Khiching (lat. 21° 56' N.; long. 85° 52' E.; District Mayurbhanj), ancient Khijjiṅga, was the early capital of the Bhaṇjas of Mayurbhanj. Better known for its Brahmanical temples, it once nourished a flourishing Buddhist settlement.

A haphazard small-scale digging in the mound, locally known as Virātgarh, has exposed partially the remains of a brick quadrangular structure with cells on four sides of a central courtyard. The structure looks like a Buddhist monastery, a presumption strengthened by the discovery in this area of six terracotta plaques (two now housed in the Khiching Museum and four in the Baripada Museum), each with the relief of a *stūpa* and the Buddhist creed in characters of about the tenth century A.D. The reliefs of the *stūpas* present a moulded base, a high cylindrical drum, a plain dome and a *chhatravali* of five umbrellas.

There are also several isolated sanctuaries of varied plans. None of them preserve their superstructures. One of them is locally known as Chaṇḍiāsāl. Of peculiar plan,



it is a brick structure in mud with a central sanctuary, four cells at corners and four chambers, open in their front, between the cells, all built on a moulded plinth, the latter having inconspicuous offsets at intervals. The sanctuary, with a narrow *pradakshina-patha* around it, is *pañcha-ratha* on plan: its lowest moulding, in the form of a *khurā* with a number of shallow facets, is alone preserved. The narrow interior is barely sufficient for the stone pedestal of the missing image. The door-frame, which is still *in situ*, is of stone, the sill being in the form of an inconspicuous moonstone flanked on either side by a conch. The fragmentary image of Vajrasattva, which is now exhibited in the Khiching museum, is said to have been brought from this structure. In front of this structure and surrounded by an enclosure are seven small brick plinths on three sides of a larger laterite plinth. The exact nature of the complex is uncertain.

The brick structure called Itāmundiā consists of three brick cells in one alignment preceded by a common verandah. The central cell is longer than the side ones. Evidently, it served as a shrine. It has a stone door-frame, some of the stones of which were collected from older structures. The lintel has in its centre the figure of Buddha in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* seated on a *viśva-padma* above a *vajra*. Within the sanctum was found a life-sized stone image of Buddha (now in the Khiching Museum) in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*, on a *viśva-padma* supported by lions, below the *Bodhi* tree. Square plinths of several votive *stūpas* together with a circular one, all of bricks, exist in front of the structure.

The remains at Saṅkharājār-garh comprise a small brick sanctuary and a brick oblong *maṇḍapa* with stone pillars, both reduced to the last stage of decay. The sill of the stone door-frame is fashioned in the shape of a moonstone flanked by a conch. A fairly large inscribed image of Lokeśa (lower portion alone is preserved in the Khiching Museum) was recovered from this place. Of about the eleventh century A.D., it was dedicated in the reign of Rāyabhaṅja.

The structure, known as Kukuḍāgarh, is a plain square temple of granite, standing now to a maximum height of 3 ft. 4 in. Inside it was found a small stone image of Buddha in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*, now shifted to the Khiching Museum.

Among the architectural pieces lying in the compound of the Khiching Museum there are a few carved lintels with figures of Buddha and Lokeśvara, besides the stones of a masonry *stūpa* which was originally located within the village to the south-west of the Thākurañi-compound.

Besides the images noticed above, there are several Buddhist images lying both inside and outside the Khiching Museum. They include Buddha, Arapachana Mañjuśrī, Vasudhārā, Jambhala, Tārā, Lokeśvara and Vajrasattva. Four images—one each of Buddha, Tārā, Arapachana Mañjuśrī and Mārīchī—of Khiching are now exhibited in the Baripada Museum. Particularly remarkable among these is the eight-armed figure of Mārīchī (photo 140).



## 12. WEST BENGAL AND EAST PAKISTAN

It is not definitely known when Bengal first received the message of Śākyamuni, though Hiuen Tsang saw a number of *stūpas* said to have been built by Aśoka at the spots where Buddha is believed to have preached in person. Two of the donors of the railings of Stūpa 1 of Sanchi are known to have hailed from Puṇavādhana which has been identified by some with Puṇḍravardhana (northern Bengal). The earliest indubitable epigraphic evidence of the hold of Buddhism in Vāṅga (south-eastern Bengal) is furnished by one of the Nagarjunakonda inscriptions (p. 15), referable to the third century A.D. Earlier in date, however, is a fragmentary image<sup>1</sup> of Buddha of the Kushān period and of the Mathura workshop, found at Chandraketurgarh (Berachampa, District 24 Parganas). The faith does not appear to have made any appreciable impression on the land till the rule of the Guptas.

Literary evidence, mostly Chinese and Tibetan, inscriptional references, illustrations on the Buddhist manuscripts, mostly of the Pāla period, and myriads of sculptures attest to the existence of numerous flourishing establishments—*stūpas*, monasteries and temples—from the fifth to the twelfth century A.D. But coming to the actual structural remains one is confronted with extreme scarcity. The soft alluvial formation of the land subject to periodical heavy rains and devastating floods loosening the very fabric of structures and leading to the growth of rank vegetation and frequent erosions of the river-banks,<sup>2</sup> no doubt, partly account for this. Added to this is the scarcity of stone which led the builders to use less durable and perishable materials like bricks, clay and wood which could hardly withstand the adverse forces of nature. Human agency, either actuated by the iconoclastic zeal or for securing building materials, completed the work of destruction of monuments left by nature. The Muslim conquerors denuded completely some of the largest establishments of their bricks and stones to erect their own structures, in which even the images, deliberately mangled, were utilized as building materials. The remains of less conspicuous ones or obscurely situated ones were reduced to mounds due to desertion and neglect. Most of them, specially those which were situated on plains, were gradually denuded and levelled under the periodical floods and the plough of the farmers. Only a few, situated on high lands and above the level of floods, mostly in northern and eastern Bengal (now included in East Pakistan), survive at present.

By the fifth century A.D. Buddhism was firmly established throughout Bengal. We get a glimpse of a number of centres of this period, apart from Chandraketurgarh which produced a sealing with the Buddhist creed in Gupta characters.<sup>3</sup> This particular site yielded, among other things like *stūpas*, a bronze figure of Maitreya.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed some light antiquities were caught in fishermen's nets.

<sup>3</sup> *Indian Archaeology 1963-64—A Review*, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* for the year 1964-65, p. 53.



One of the important centres of the Gupta period was Tāmralipti, modern Tamluk (District Midnapur, West Bengal), also the principal emporium to which flocked merchants from various parts of the globe for trade. Fa-hien, who resided in this seat of learning for a span of two years in the beginning of the fifth century A.D., preparing copies of *sūtras* and drawing pictures of images, found the religion flourishing with twenty-four monasteries in the country. A terracotta plaque with a relief of Buddha in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* and with the Buddhist creed in Gupta characters was found at Panna (District Midnapur, West Bengal). The remains of what looks like a brick monastery have been located in the Rājbaḍī mound at Biharail (District Rajshahi, East Pakistan) which has yielded from time to time a number of antiquities including a standing image (fifth century A.D.) of Buddha of the Chunar sandstone, closely affiliated to the contemporaneous images of Sarnath. Another important centre grew up near Mahasthan (District Bogra, East Pakistan), the ancient capital of Puṇḍravardhana. From the Balāidhāp mound near it was picked up a gold-plated bronze image of Mañjuśrī of fine workmanship of the Gupta period. This image and also another bronze image of a Bodhisattva, found near the mound, are now in the V.R. Museum, Rajshahi. A fine stone image of standing Buddha of the Gupta period hailed from Bhasu-vihar,<sup>5</sup> 3 miles north-west of the fortified mound of Mahasthan. Another, but unidentified, centre of Varendra (northern Bengal), was at Mrigasthāpana. According to I-tsing, Mahārāja Śrī-Gupta constructed a temple for the Chinese monks near the Mi-li-kia-si-kia-po-no (Mrigasthāpana) and made an endowment of twenty-four villages for its upkeep. An illustrated Cambridge University Library manuscript of A.D. 1015<sup>6</sup> contains a painting of the Mrigasthāpana *stūpa* consisting of a circular drum in several terraces, with their parapet in the form of lotus-petals, and a hemispherical dome having a niche with a figure of Buddha on the front. The existence of Buddhist *viḥāras* in south-eastern Bengal in the Gupta period is also amply borne out by the Gunaighar (18 miles to the north-west of Comilla, District Tippera, East Pakistan) copper-plate inscription of the Gupta ruler Vainyagupta, dated A.D. 507, recording grants of lands to the Avaivarttika-saṅgha of the Mahāyāna doctrine in the Āśrama-viḥāra, this being dedicated to Avalokiteśvara. The plate also refers to another neighbouring monastery, called Rāja-viḥāra, evidently established by a king.

The fall of the Guptas had no adverse effect on the faith which continued to flourish, as may be seen from the account of Hiuen Tsang who visited Bengal about A.D. 638 shortly after the death of Śaśāṅka. He speaks of four kingdoms—(i) Puṇḍravardhana (northern Bengal) with twenty monasteries peopled with above three thousand monks of both the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna orders, (ii) Samataṭa (Tippera-Noakhali region of south-eastern Bengal) with more than thirty monasteries, two thousand monks of the Sthavira sect and an Aśokan *stūpa* near the capital, (iii) Tāmralipti (south-western part of Bengal) with about ten monasteries (as against twenty-four of Fa-hien), more

<sup>5</sup> N. Ahmed, *Mahasthan* (Karachi, 1964), pl. X.

<sup>6</sup> The same manuscript illustrates the Dharmarājikāchaitya in Rāḍha (western Bengal), a *stūpa* with its elaborately moulded plinth in two tiers.



than one thousand monks and an Aśokan *stūpa* near the capital, and (iv) Karmasuvarṇa (northern part of western Bengal) with more than ten monasteries and two thousand monks of the Sāramitiya sect.<sup>7</sup>

Among the *vihāras*, Hiuen Tsang specifically mentions the Po-shih-p'o monastery, 3 miles west of the capital of Puṇḍravardhana, and the Lo-to-mo-chih monastery by the side of the capital town of Karmasuvarṇa. In the former monastery, 'which had spacious halls and tall storeyed chambers, were above 700 Brethren all Mahāyānists; it had also many distinguished monks from "East India"'. Near it was an Asoka tope at the place where Buddha had preached for three months; and near that were traces of the Four Buddhas having sat and walked up and down. Not far from this spot was a temple with an image of Kuan-tzu-tsai p'u-sa which gave supernatural exhibitions, and was consulted by people from far and near.' The site of the Po-shih-p'o monastery and other Buddhist edifices has been identified with the impressive mounds of Bihar and Bhasu-vihar near Mahasthan.

Lo-to-mo-chih, 'a magnificent and famous establishment, the resort of illustrious Brethren', was stated to have been founded by a king to honour a Buddhist *śramaṇa* from southern India on his victory over 'a disputant of another system.' 'Near this monastery were several topes built by Asoka at spots where the Buddha had preached and also a shrine (*ching-shē*) where the Four Past Buddhas had sat and walked for exercise'. Lo-to-mo-chih stands for Raktamṛttikā,<sup>8</sup> the name of which survives in Rangamati, a locality near the Chiruti railway-station (District Murshidabad, West Bengal). Two of the mounds of this area are known as Rākshasī-dāngā (in the village Pratappur-Chandpara adjoining Rangamati) and Rājbaḍī-dāngā (within the jurisdiction of the village of Yadupur adjoining Pratappur-Chandpara). The excavation at the former mound unearthed remains of brick structures, the lowest of which has been supposed to have been a Buddhist establishment of about the sixth or seventh century A.D. The site yielded several terracotta and stucco heads, some with Buddhist affiliation. The recent excavation at the Rājbaḍī-dāngā mound is, however, more fruitful. Apart from the discovery of remains of impressive buildings, it yielded a good crop of antiquities including bronze images, a seal and sealings. Some of the sealings with the Buddhist creed date as early as the seventh-eighth century A.D. More important, however, are the sealings of the community of monks of the Raktamṛttikā-mahāvihāra.

Though the establishments of Tāmralipti dwindled in number since the time of Fa-hien (p. 235), they maintained for some time more their celebrity as centres of learning, to which resorted a number of Chinese pilgrims following Hiuen Tsang. Thus, Tao-lin halted here for three years to study the Sanskrit language. Ta-ch'eng-t'eng stayed here as many as twelve years. When he was residing here in a *vihāra*, called Po-lo-ho, I-tsing came to this place and spent some time in learning Sanskrit and *Śabda-vidyā*. The faith seems to have waned here after this period, though the Kalyani

<sup>7</sup> T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (London, 1905), pp. 184, 185 and 187-91.

<sup>8</sup> A native of Raktamṛttikā, the master-mariner (*mahā-nāvika*) Buddhagupta went in the Gupta period to the Malay Peninsula where he left an inscribed stone slab with the representation of a *stūpa*.



inscriptions (p. 194) speak of Sivali Thera (twelfth century A.D.), a native of Tāmal-ithi, who repaired to Ceylon for perfecting his knowledge of the *Tripiṭaka*, emigrating to Pagan. It is a matter of great regret that the vestiges of not a single establishment have so far been identified at modern Tamluk.

The case, however, is different at Samatāṭa where the religion was waxing under the fostering care of the ruling kings. Śilabhadra, the head of the monastic establishment of Nālandā at the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit, came from the royal family of this kingdom. According to the Kailan (13 miles west of the Lalmai railway-station, East Pakistan) copper-plate, Śrīdhārāṇa-rāta (*circa* third quarter of the seventh century A.D.), lord of Samatāṭa, though of the Brahmanical faith, granted, at the request of his minister of war and peace, lands, within the jurisdiction of the Kumārāmātya of Devaparvata (Mainamati-Lalmai range of hills), for the worship of Buddha, the reading and writing of the Buddhist religious texts and the provision of food, clothing and other necessities of the monks. The Chinese monk Sheng-chi, a contemporary of I-tsing, who visited Samatāṭa in the second half of the seventh century, found four thousand monks and nuns here. The king Rājabhāṭa, a devout Buddhist, was stated to have conducted processions in honour of Buddha with an image of Avalokiteśvara at the front. This king has been identified by some with Rājarājabhāṭa, son of Devakhaḍga of the Buddhist Khaḍga dynasty who extended his power over Samatāṭa. At Ashrafpur (30 miles north-east of Dacca, East Pakistan) was found a bronze votive *stūpa* along with two copper-plates of the Khaḍgas. The plates, issued from Karmānta, identified with Badkamta, 6 miles west of Mainamati (pp. 243 ff.), record grants of land to the Buddhist monasteries. The prosperity of the Buddhist establishment of Devaparvata reached its peak under the Buddhist Devas (eighth-ninth century).

Among the centres of eastern India, Harikela attained a wide celebrity as a seat of learning in the seventh century A.D. I-tsing in his 'Memoirs of Eminent Priests who visited India' refers to Chinese pilgrims resorting to A-li-ki-lo or O-li-ki-lo, identified with Harikela. Thus, Wu-hing, whom I-tsing saw off 6 *yojanas* east of Nālandā in about A.D. 685, had stayed at Harikela for one year before he went to Mahābodhi and Nālandā.<sup>9</sup> Another monk, Tan-Kwong, settled at Harikela, won the respects of the king of that country, got a temple built, collected books and images and died there.<sup>10</sup> In the ninth century, a Buddhist king, named Kāntideva, was the overlord of Harikelā-maṇḍala.

Buddhism reached its zenith under the active patronage of the *parama-saṅgata* Pālas. Their long rule of four centuries in major parts of Bengal saw the growth of a large number of monasteries which became the radiating centres of Buddhist learning. Of these mention may be made of (i) Traikutaka in Rāḍha (western Bengal) where Haribhadra, under the patronage of Dharmapāla wrote his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, (ii) Devikoṭa (Bangarh, District West Dinajpur, West Bengal), (iii) Paṇḍita, a stronghold of Tantricism, in Chittagong (East Pakistan), (iv) Sannagara from which hailed

<sup>9</sup> J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671-695)* by I-tsing (Oxford, 1896), p. xlv.

<sup>10</sup> S. Beal, *The Life of Hiuen Tsiang* (London, 1888), p. xxix.



Vanaratna, noted for his Tibetan translations of a number of texts, (v) Jagaddala in Varendri (northern Bengal), (vi) Vikramapuri (Vikrampur, District Dacca, East Pakistan), (vii) Paṭṭikeraka (Mainamati-Lalmai range, pp. 243 ff.) and (viii) Somapura (pp. 240 ff.) in northern Bengal. Among these only the ruins of the last two, both now in East Pakistan, have so far been identified, while a large number of images, of both the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna pantheons were found in the *pargana* of Vikrampur (District Dacca), one of the villages of which is still known as Vajrayogini, evidently named after the Buddhist goddess of that name.<sup>11</sup> Some of these *mahāvihāras*, like Jagaddala, Somapura and Sannagara, produced a number of celebrities who translated many books in Tibetan and went to Tibet to preach the religion.

A promising site of the Pāla period has been located at Pillack-South Jolaibari area in the Belonia sub-division of Tripura State. Spread over an extensive area, the remains consist of mounds of bricks and brick-bats. Some of the mounds yielded images of Buddha and deities of the Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna pantheon. A small standing figure of Padmapāni in bronze was discovered in South Jolaibari.

The prosperity of Buddhism in south-eastern Bengal was uninterrupted, even though the supremacy of the Pālas was overthrown here by the Chandras (circa A.D. 900-1050), the new rulers being themselves ardent Buddhists. They were originally petty local rulers of Rohitāgiri, identified by some with Lalmai hill (pp. 243 f.). But gradually they extended their sphere of influence in Harikela and Chandradvīpa comprising major parts of eastern Bengal including coastal regions and made Vikramapura (Rampal in the heart of the Vikrampur *pargana*) their capital. The already-noted Cambridge University Library manuscript<sup>12</sup> contains the painted illustrations of the famous Buddhist divinities of this tract, e.g. two-armed seated Tārā of Chandradvīpa, two-armed standing Champitālā Lokanātha of Samatāṭa, sixteen-armed seated Chundā of Paṭṭikerā (pp. 244 f.), six-armed standing Śīla-Lokanātha of Harikelladeśa and two-armed seated Jayatunga-Lokanātha of Samatāṭa, while a manuscript of A.D. 1071, preserved in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, adds another famous image of Samatāṭa, namely, Buddhaddhi Bhagavati Tārā.

The Buddhist Chandras were supplanted by the Brahmanical Varmanas, some of whom were, no doubt, tolerant of Buddhism, just as the Pālas and the Chandras showed respect towards Brahmanism. Three Buddhist manuscripts were copied in the eighth, nineteenth and thirty-ninth year of Harivarman (about the end of the eleventh century A.D.). The Vajrayogini copper-plate of his brother Śyāmalavarman speaks of his gifts towards the temple of Prajñāpāramitā. This dynasty was in its turn, in about the middle of the twelfth century, fell before the Senas of Raḍha (western Bengal) who ultimately in the second half of the twelfth century overthrew the Pālas, confined at that time to northern Bengal. We have little information about the state of the Buddhist establishments during

<sup>11</sup> Buddhist images and inscriptions were also found here. One of the inscriptions in characters of the tenth or eleventh century A.D. invokes both Vāsudeva and Buddha.

<sup>12</sup> This manuscript of the eleventh century A.D. bears illustrations of not less than twenty Buddhist deities and *stūpas* located in different parts of Bengal like Puṇḍravardhana, Varendra, Rāḍha, Dandabhukti, Chandradvīpa, Samatāṭa, Paṭṭikerā and Harikelladeśa.



the rule of the Senas, but in the *Gīta-Govinda* of Jayadeva, the court-poet of Lakshmanasena (circa A.D. 1179-1206), Buddha is invoked as the ninth incarnation of Vishnu.

As already noted, the long rule of the Pālas saw an enormous growth of the Vajrayāna pantheon. Myriads of sculptures of this category (mostly of the ninth to twelfth century A.D.), like Vajrasattva, various forms of Lokeśvara (like Khasarpaṇa, Shaḍlakṣharī and Sugatisandarsana) and Mañjuśrī, Jambhala, Heruka, Prajñāpāramitā, Mārīchi, Vajra-Tārā, Sitātapatrā, Tārā, Vāgīśvarī, Parnaśavarī, Mahāpratisarā, Hārītī, Khadiravaṇī Tārā, Hevajra and Chundā, were found sporadically in various parts of Bengal, their original shrines having all disappeared. Many of them have enriched the Dacca and Rajshahi Museums of East Pakistan, Indian Museum, Asutosh Museum and Vangiya Sahitya Parishad Museum of Calcutta and the local Museum of Malda, while there are still many which found their way to the private collections. Several of these images display unmistakable Brahmanical influences. But the borrowings were mutual, as Buddhist concepts including even the depiction of Dhyaṇi-Buddhas on the stele were freely introduced in the Brahmanical images as well. The fusion of the Buddhist and Brahmanical ideas in some of the later images is so close that sometimes clear-cut denominational iconography is not possible.

Being defeated by Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī, Lakshmanasena about the beginning of the thirteenth century fled to eastern Bengal, where he and his successors ruled for some time more from their capital at Vikramapura. But their existence is precarious, as some of the chiefs like Raṇavaṅkamalla Śrī Harikāladeva carved out small, but independent, principalities. The majority of the centres of northern and western Bengal did not long survive the Muslim conquest of these tracts, but some establishments continued its existence at the south-eastern corner. One such centre was Paṭṭikerā (pp. 243 f.) which received benefactions of the local chief Raṇavaṅkamalla Śrī Harikāladeva as late as in A.D. 1220. The colophon of a manuscript of *Pañcharakṣhā*, dated A.D. 1289, mentions a Buddhist king Madhusena, who may be a scion of the Sena dynasty. Even if we reject the authenticity of the Sabhar<sup>13</sup> (District Dacca) inscription of the end of the fourteenth century of Harishchandra which preambles with a Buddhist invocation, there is no doubt that small communities lingered even afterwards. Tāranātha speaks of his Tantric Guru, Buddhagupta, visiting Tipura and 'the high land of Tipura where there is Kasaraṅga or Devikōṭa'.

Thus, Tippera and the adjoining Chittagong were the last resort of the Buddhists. Even now Buddhism is a living religion in this tract near Laksham in District Tippera, south-eastern parts of Chittagong, Chittagong Hill tracts bordering Arakan and Burma and in northern Bengal in Darjeeling. But it appears that these pockets are more due to the later revivalist movements, one coming from the direction of Arakan and Burma and the other from Nepal and Tibet, than a pure survival. The influence of Burma in the region around Chittagong was already felt in the bronzes discovered near Chittagong. In the later period its impact through Arakan was even more, as it imposed its Hīnayāna

<sup>13</sup> The Buddhist association of the ruins at Sabhar is proved by the discovery of a number of terracotta slabs stamped with the figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas within circular medallions ascribable to about the ninth or tenth century.



doctrine on the people, the ancestors of whom professed Tantric Buddhism. About a century back when the Buddhists, many of whom were the descendants of Arakanese immigrants and Maghs (of Arakanese mothers and Bengali fathers), had started worshipping Hindu deities, a great reformation took place through the efforts of an Arakanese priest, known as Saṅgha Rājā.<sup>14</sup>

#### A. PAHARPUR (SOMAPURA)

One of the memorable centres of Buddhism that sprang up in eastern India under the patronage of the Buddhist Pālas was Somapura, far away from any known town or capital. The establishment of the Somapura monastery, monumental of its kind, was due to the munificence of Dharmapāla (circa A.D. 770-810), the second ruler of the dynasty, as is evident from the discovery of sealings with the legend *Śrī-Somapure Śrī-Dharmapāladeva-mahāvihāriy-ārya-bhikṣu-saṅghasya*.

The ruins of the Somapura monastery have been identified with those at Paharpur (lat. 25° 2' N.; long. 89° 3' E.; District Rajshahi, East Pakistan), 3 miles away from the Jamalganj railway-station. Paharpur, 'hill-town', apparently owes its name to the loftiness of its ruins (presenting the appearance of a *pāhād* or hill), mainly of the main sanctuary of the place, rising 70 ft. above the flat land. The name of the founder is most probably echoed in the name of the adjoining village of Dharmapuri and that of the site in the village of Ompur. On excavation, the mound yielded a vast monastic complex, consisting of the usual residential cells of monks, places of worship and other ancillary structures.

The layout of the establishment, the biggest monastery so far exposed, is uncommon. Whereas in most Buddhist sites in northern India we find the monasteries proper and places of worship—*stūpas* and temples—existing as separate units and forming parts of a growing and sometimes incoherent complex, at Paharpur the establishment was from its very start well-planned and homogeneous; both the essential requirements of a monastic establishment, viz. the monastery proper—residential cells for monks—and the main place of worship were situated within a single well-defined compound, the cells located along the inner periphery of the compound and the sanctuary standing in the centre thereof (fig. 11, p. 40). The cells were, as usual, fronted by a running verandah. The extent of the monastery was unusually large, being 822 ft. square externally. The number of cells was as many as one hundred and seventy-seven, excluding the three special blocks, one each in the middle of the south, east and west sides and the entrance-hall in the north. This unified character of the monastery may indicate that the monks residing therein belonged in the beginning to one and the same sect, so that there was no necessity of having separate monastic units for monks of different affiliations.

The monastery was entered from the north through a square pillared porch approached by a low staircase. A door in the back wall of the porch gave access to a rear

<sup>14</sup> A reliable account of the Buddhists of Chittagong in the beginning of the present century is to be found in L.S.S. O'Malley, *Chittagong*, Eastern Bengal District Gazetteers (Calcutta, 1908), pp. 58, 59 and 65-72.



porch, the latter landing into the verandah which runs in front of the cells. The cells were more or less uniform in nature, but the subsequent construction of ornamental pedestals and the installation thereon of images, now missing, would indicate their conversion into private shrines in many cases. The extensive open space of the quadrangle between the verandah of the cells and the central sanctuary, described below, contained a large number of minor structures, which included shrines and votive *stūpas*, one of them simulating the cruciform plan of the main sanctuary.

The main sanctuary (photo 141), at the central part of the courtyard, is surrounded by an enclosure-wall. It rose in three terraces. Its high plinth, 356 ft. 6 in. from north to south and 314 ft. 3 in. from east to west, was *pañcha-ratha* on plan on all sides except on the north, on which side it was *sapta-ratha* and was longer, so as to include the staircase which gave access from the ground to the first terrace.

In the centre of the core and over a pile of regularly-laid bricks and brick-bats, which reached a height of 30 ft. from the presumptive ground-level, rose a tall square shaft—the spinal chord of the central edifice—the paved floor of which at the bottom was 6 ft. 6 in. long and 6 ft. 2 in. wide. Above this floor, there were nine step-like courses, at the top of which the shaft became 12 ft. 6 in. square. An outward bulge near the top made the shaft nearly 13 ft. 6 in. long and only somewhat less wide at the top. The interior of the shaft was found filled in with bricks, brick-bats, earth and other diverse material. What was the original height of the vertical walls of the shaft it is not possible to say, but with their extant height of 41 ft., they reached the extant top of the mound, near which were remnants of a brick floor.<sup>15</sup>

The walls of the upper part of the shaft were about 18 ft. 10½ in. thick, so that the superstructure must have been colossal. Flanking these walls was said to have been a verandah, 11 ft. wide. A block, 72 ft. 9 in. square, was thus obtained: it included the verandah and the walls enclosing the shaft. The verandah formed the third (topmost) terrace of the edifice.<sup>16</sup>

Against the four outer rearing walls of the verandah, but at a lower level, was an oblong central projection, externally 39 ft. 6 in. wide, accommodating a shrine (ante-chamber according to the excavator) and a fronting *mandapa*. What the original *mandapas* were like it is not known, but, as stated below, they were subsequently turned into a stone-pillared one. As the external width of these shrine-complexes (39 ft. 6 in.)

<sup>15</sup> Whether the floor belonged to the original top structure or was laid in modern times by a *fakir* who built a chamber at the top of the mound (as seen by Buchanan Hamilton) could not be definitely ascertained.

<sup>16</sup> Seemingly there was no means of access to this terrace. The extremely narrow and steep steps (the tread being only 5 in. to 7 in. and the rise 10 in. to 1 ft.) in the back wall of the southern shrine on the second terrace, which, according to the excavator, led to the third terrace, were, no doubt, inadequate for such a magnificent monument and could not have been intended for public use. It has, therefore, been suggested that there was no shrine to house an image for worship, but a *stūpa*, on the top. It is not possible to be definite on this point in view of the great dilapidation of the top. A. Cunningham saw a large number of wedge-shaped bricks, some with one face carved, on the dilapidated top of the structure long before its excavation. This may point out that the superstructure was in the form of a *stūpa*. Even if the superstructure was shaped like a temple it was a closed one.



was shorter by 33 ft. 3 in. than the length of the exterior walls of the central block or the topmost terrace (72 ft. 9 in. square), against the central portions of which they were built, a recess of 16 ft. 7½ in. was left at each extremity of the wall. Thus, while the plan of the third terrace was simply square, that of the second terrace was a cross with wide central projections in the middle of four sides—in other words, it was *tri-ratha*. All round was a walled *pradakshina-patha* (9 ft. wide), following the same plan. The floor of the shrines was at a depth of 28 ft. below the verandah of the top terrace.

Down below, on the first terrace there was an oblong central walled projection, smaller in width than the shrine-complex on the second terrace. A *pradakshina-patha* went all round this terrace as well. The plan of this terrace was, therefore, *pañcha-ratha*, which, as stated above, was also the plan of the plinth on all sides except the north, which for reasons of its own, followed a different plan.

It is clear that the edifice, notwithstanding its elaborate design, was the result of a homogeneous conception and allowed no additions. Nevertheless, restorations and minor alterations, mostly of an inconsequential nature and not altering the original layout, did take place. Of them, mention may be made of the reconditioning, in the reign of Mahendrapāla of Kanauj (circa A.D. 885-912), of the *mandapas* in front of the shrines on the second terrace, by the provision of stone pillars to support the roof.

While terraced religious edifices are not uncommon in India, the one at Paharpur is more elaborate than any of its extant counterparts. The style of its architecture is perhaps inspired by the earlier terraced *stūpas*, with four projected niches containing images of Buddha facing the cardinal directions. Its analogues exist outside India, in Burma<sup>17</sup> and Indonesia, both of which, in intimate connection with eastern India, might have partaken of the same architectural tradition as of Paharpur and might even have been inspired by it. One of the links in the chain is provided by the terraced edifice at Mainamati (p. 245). A second structure of this style has recently been unearthed at Antichak (p. 57).

The grandeur of the sanctuary at Paharpur was enhanced by the exuberant treatment of the exterior walls of its plinth and lower terraces with courses of bricks cut in different shapes and patterns and with continuous friezes of terracotta plaques of exceptionally rich and varied themes set in recessed panels on the plinth and terrace-walls. As many as two thousand plaques were found *in situ* and about eight hundreds were picked up loose. Though of varying artistic merit, they covered 'all conceivable subjects of human interest', including divine figures, both Brahmanical and Buddhist. Further, the walls of the plinth contained sixty-three irregularly-disposed niches, each having a stone image. Some of these images were illustrative of the mythology and folk-lore of the country and belonged to the popular idiom of art and religion. The rest consisted of Brahmanical images of the orthodox order and were affiliated to the late Gupta tradition. They might have been removed from an older and presumably Brahmanical temple and installed here for decoration.

<sup>17</sup> S. K. Saraswati, 'Temples at Pagan,' *Journal of the Greater India Society*, IX (1942), pp. 5-28; 'Abeyadāna and Patothamya, two interesting temples at Pagan', *ibid.*, X (1943), pp. 145-53.



Among the important loose antiquities found here mention may be made of a few bronze images, including one each of Buddha and the Buddhist counterpart of Kubera, several stucco heads and a stone image of Hevajra with Śakti, the cult of the last of which belongs to the last phase of Vajrayāna. The image of this deity, though very common in Tibet, is rather rare in India.

To the east of the monastic establishment, nearly 300 yards away, was a temple of Tārā—an oblong structure with a sanctum, a pillared *maṇḍapa* and a *pradakṣiṇa*-patha. Within the trapezoidal temple-compound were noticed as many as one hundred and thirty-two votive *stūpas* of varying shapes and sizes, the largest and smallest being respectively 25 ft. and 2 ft. 9 in. in diameter. In the relic-chamber of one of these *stūpas* were found several thousands of miniature votive *stūpas* of clay, each containing within two circular clay tablets, with the Buddhist creed, placed face to face. Among the terracotta plaques, about fifty bear the figure of an eight-handed goddess, possibly some form of Tārā, and three of Buddha, one of the latter of which bore inside it two tablets with a *dhāraṇī* inscribed on them. It is interesting to note that according to a twelfth-century Nālandā inscription, a temple of Tārā was constructed at Somapura by a monk, Vipulaśrimitra, for the removal of eight perils (p. 165). As the temple originated earlier than the twelfth century, it is contended that Vipulaśrimitra might have renovated and not actually built this very temple. The same monk claims to have effected large-scale repairs and renovations to the inner and outer sectors of the four flanks (of the great monastery) which braved the fire and sword of the invading army of Vaṅgāla (south-eastern Bengal) in the time of Karuṇāśrimitra, fourth in spiritual ascent from him.

The establishment acquired a great sanctity specially among the Tibetan Buddhists, many of whom undertook a pilgrimage to this spot from ninth century A.D. to the twelfth century. Dipaṅkara Śrījñāna Atiśa, a famous monk of Bengal who went to Tibet, is known from the Tibetan source, to have stayed for years in this monastery of Somapura in which his spiritual preceptor Ratnākara-śānti was a *sthavira*. Monks from this monastery are known from their inscriptions to have made donations at Bodh-Gaya and Nālandā when they visited those places. The establishment continued to flourish till the twelfth century A.D., to which period are ascribable a few inscriptions. The rule of the Brahmanical Senas followed by the Muslim conquest in the beginning of the thirteenth century saw the decline and the ultimate extinction of this great Buddhist establishment.

#### B. MAINAMATI (PAṬṬIKERĀ)

On the slopes and on the flat top of a low range of hills extending from Mainamati on the north to the Lalmai railway-station on the south for over a length of 11 miles and locally known as Mainamati-Lalmai Ridge, 5 miles to the west of Comilla (lat. 23° 25' N.; long. 91° 7' E.; District Tippera, East Pakistan) were discovered, in course of the establishment of a military camp during the Second World War, the ruins of a cluster of Buddhist establishments of the ancient Paṭṭikerā. The name Mainamati (the northernmost part of the range) seems to have originated after a queen of that name (Madanāvati), around whom centre many a legend in Bengal and who is believed to have been the



consort of Mānikachandra of the Buddhist Chandra dynasty (circa A.D. 900-1050) of Rohitāgiri, probably represented by the Lalmai hill. Paṭṭikerā, the ancient name surviving in the modern *pargana* of Pāṭikārā or Pāṭikārā, by the side of the hill, was once a royal seat. This kingdom shared a common border with Burma and had contacts with that country and Arakan. The ancient name of the range of hills was Devaparvata.

Buddhist colonies cropped up from very early times on the Devaparvata which is barely 6 miles from Karmānta (modern Badkamta), the populous and prosperous capital of Samatāṭa. The Kailan plate of Śrīdhāraṇa-rāta (circa third quarter of the seventh century A.D.) records grant of lands within the jurisdiction of Devaparvata in favour of the Buddhist establishment. The centre was in a flourishing state in the regime of the Khadgas (second half of the seventh century), the Devas (eighth-ninth century) and the Chandras (tenth and eleventh centuries), most of the kings of these dynasties being Buddhists. Bhavadeva, one of the scions of the Deva dynasty, built a spectacular monastery, known as Bhavadeva-mahāvihāra.

That the establishment attained a celebrity in the Buddhist world as an important Buddhist centre before the eleventh century is attested by the painting of a sixteen-armed Chundā<sup>18</sup> with the legend 'Paṭṭikere Chundāvarabhavane Chundā' on a manuscript (Cambridge University Library manuscript no. Add. 1643) of the *Ashtasahasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā*, copied in the year A.D. 1015. As late as A.D. 1220, in the reign of a ruler named Raṇavaṅkamalla Śrī Harikāladeva, a land was granted by an official, most probably of the Burmese origin, as known from a copper-plate found at Mainamati, in favour of a *vihāra* dedicated to Durgottārā, a form of Tārā, built in the town of Paṭṭikerā. The donor is described as proficient in the rites of the Sahaja cult; the region itself seems to have been a centre of Sahajayāna, a late Tantric Buddhist cult which, while imbibing the mysticism of Vajrayāna, did away with its ceremonials. Tippera is one of the few districts where Buddhism has its followers down to the present day, the concentration being in the neighbourhood of Laksham, about 15 miles from Mainamati.

The discovery of an overwhelmingly large number of valuable antiquities like bronze images of Buddha, silver coins with the legend *Patikera*, sculptures, ornamental bricks and terracotta plaques (photo 142) in course of the trench-diggings during the War was followed up by a survey of the site which substantiated fully the literary evidence regarding the prosperity of the Buddhist establishments here. Not less than twenty conspicuous mounds were located on the range. Among these mounds, the locally-known Ānandarājā's palace containing the ruins of what looks like a quadrangular monastery with a central cruciform sanctuary as at Paharpur, Rūpavān-kanyā's palace and Bhojarājā's palace, both with an arrangement similar to that of the Ānandarājā's palace, but on a smaller scale, Rupban-muḍā, probably a monastery with a central cruciform temple, which yielded seven pots with bronze images of Buddha, Sālbanrājā's palace, Kotila-muḍā, Charpatra-muḍā and Chaṇḍi-muḍā, at the foot of which was found an image of Mañjuvara, appear to be particularly promising. Most of these sites produced countless plaques

<sup>18</sup> A. Foucher, *Étude sur l'Iconographie Bouddhique de l'Inde d'après des documents nouveaux*, Part II (Paris, 1900), pl. VIII, 4.



(photo 142)—an inspired orgy of terracotta art. Exuberant in the richness of themes, drawing freely from divine, semi-divine, mythical, human, animal and bird lives and floral and plant motifs and executed in the best traditions of folk art, they display an outflow of plastic freedom exploiting almost all aspects of life. The figures, unsurpassed for their dynamic movement, are technically mature.

Some of these mounds have been excavated by the archaeological department of Pakistan during 1955-57. Among these mounds, the one known as Sālbanrājā's palace was found to be particularly rich in structural remains. The excavation here laid bare an exceptionally large monastery, about 550 ft. square, with one hundred and fifteen cells disposed around a central courtyard with a running verandah, 8 ft. 6 in. wide, in between. The gate and the porch of the monastery were built against the northern wall but in the centre. The gate was approached by a brick-paved road, 174 ft. long and 3 ft. wide. The outer walls of the cells were as thick as 16 ft. 6 in. The layout of the monastery, no doubt, followed that of Paharpur (p. 240), though on a smaller scale. Most of the cells contained a corbelled niche and an oven, sometimes with a cooking-pot on it. Evidently, the monks cooked their food individually.

In the middle of the courtyard was a *pañcha-ratha* structure with a cruciform plan as at Paharpur, the length from one end of the most projected arm to the other being 170 ft. As the structure is preserved to a small height, it is difficult to be definite if it had more than one terrace like the sanctuary of Paharpur, but the arrangement of the extant cruciform terrace, approached from the north, which served as an ambulatory passage (7 ft. wide) and communicated with the four antechambers (one in each arm of the cross), each leading to a small oblong chapel, is strongly reminiscent of the plan of the second terrace with shrines and antechambers of the edifice at Paharpur. The chapels had large bronze images of Buddha, of which the one in the west chapel is only extant. A close similarity to the sanctuary of Paharpur is also displayed in the use of carved bricks for mouldings and terracotta plaques with a wide range of subjects and in almost the same art-tradition, decorating the facing of the terrace-plinth. The monastery was contemporaneous with the early phase of Somapura-mahāvihāra.

The monastery was built by the Buddhist king Bhavadeva (circa eighth century A.D.), as indicated by a terracotta sealing with the legend *Śrī-Bhavadeva-mahāvihār[īy ?]-ārya-bhikṣu-saṅghasya* found during the excavation. A copper-plate of the same king, issued from Devaparvata (Mainamati-Lalmai range), was found in one of the cells. Bhavadeva is known from another copper-plate of unknown provenance (now in the possession of the Asiatic Society) to have granted lands to the *ratna-traya* of the Venḍamati-vihārikā. This charter was also issued from Devaparvata.

The entire complex underwent reconstructions thrice in subsequent periods. In the second period (i.e. first period of reconstruction) there was a radical departure in the plan of the central structure. It simulated the form of a monastery-like quadrangular structure<sup>19</sup> with a central projection at the rear and a pillared front porch approached by steps in

<sup>19</sup>Curiously enough, the plan of the old monastery to the south of the Samingui Pagoda at Myin-pagan (Burma) bears a striking resemblance to this temple.



the front. The structure included a rear porch communicated with the front by a door, a sanctum with a *pradakshina-patha* in the middle of the rear side and a central pillared hall, around which were rooms. Roughly the same plan, but on a reduced scale, was followed in the third period. The remains of the fourth period were too flimsy to permit any reconstruction.

There was no material deviation in the plans of the dwelling cells of Periods I and II of the monastery, and in the third period only some additions like provisions of antechambers, brick platforms and staircases in the corner cells, presumably to reach an upper storey, were made. In the fourth period the width of the peripheral walls (i.e. the back walls of the cells) was reduced from 16 ft. 6 in. to 10 ft. and the cells with the verandah were pushed backwards.

The finds inside the cells were equally rich and prolific and included a seal, sealings, bronze images of Buddha, Tārā and Bodhisattvas like Padmapāṇi, copper-plates and coins.

Near this monastery were found the remains of a brick temple with a square plan surrounded by a circumambulatory terrace (or verandah) with circular moulded pillars of bricks on a kerb at the outer edge.

At Kotila-muḍā, 3 miles north of the remains of the Bhavadeva-mahāvihāra, was exposed another important complex with *stūpas* and oblong halls enclosed by a compound-wall. Among the *stūpas*, three are particularly remarkable with their oblong platforms, relieved with sunken panels, and circular drums. These three stand in one row. The interior construction of the drum of the central one simulates a wheel with a central hub, eight spokes and a rim. In the chambers between the spokes were several stone stelae with reliefs of Buddha and Bodhisattvas and hundreds of miniature clay *stūpas* encasing tablets with Buddhist creed. The superstructure of the other two was solid, but with a central shaft which contained miniature clay *stūpas* and sealings. The site yielded several terracotta tablets inscribed with *dhāraṇīs*.



## APPENDIX

### KAPILAVASTU

#### INTRODUCTION

Kapilavastu (also called Kapilavāstu, Kapilāvastu, Kapilapura and Kapilanagara; Pali Kapilavatthu) is named after a *rishi* called Kapila. The town, according to the generally-received legendary accounts, was founded by the banished sons of an Ikshvāku king of the Solar race (ruling at Potalaka or Sāketa) at a pleasant site near the *nivāsa-sthāna* (hermitage) of Kapila. The descendants of these exiles, who are said to have married their sisters who had accompanied them, came to be known as Śākya, an endogamous tribe proud of their pure blood.

Though Kapilavastu has been described in the Buddhist scripture as a glorious town, apparently being Buddha's native town and the capital of his father Śuddhodana, the Śākya chief, it is not represented in most of the Buddhist texts as a large and flourishing city. Politically, the Śākyas most probably owed allegiance to the Kosalan monarch Prasenajit in the sixth century B.C. Kapilavastu is said to have been destroyed even during Buddha's lifetime by King Viḍūḍabha, son of Prasenajit, and the inhabitants ruthlessly massacred as a revenge on the Śākyas who had slighted, on an earlier occasion, Viḍūḍabha on account of his mother having been a slave-girl of the Śākyas. Though the total extermination of the Śākyas at the hand of Viḍūḍabha cannot be accepted in view of the Śākyas of Kapilavastu receiving a share of Buddha's body-relics, it is very likely that the tribe never flourished afterwards. When Fa-hien visited Kapilavastu, it was like a great desert with neither king nor people except for a congregation of priests and about ten families of lay people.<sup>1</sup> He, however, saw several Buddhist edifices hallowed by the incidents of Buddha's life in the place and a picture of Buddha, on a white elephant, entering his mother's body on the site of the ruined palace of Śuddhodana. Hiuen Tsang also found the city completely waste save for the foundations of walls of the royal precincts and ruined Buddhist structures.<sup>2</sup> Though there were adherents of Buddhism there at the time, they were not in an affluent state. According to Hiuen Tsang, there existed a living monastery near the royal precincts. He mentioned Kapilavastu both as a capital city and as a country with more than ten deserted cities in it. However, there was no supreme ruler, and each town had its own chief.

Being the capital of the Śākyas, of which Buddha's father was a chief, Kapilavastu finds frequent mention in the Buddhist texts which, however, do not shed any light on its precise location with reference to other towns. The references supplied by these texts are not only vague but often contradictory. Thus, according to some versions, the town was situated to the north of the Himalayas, but the majority of the texts would put Kapilavastu on or near the southern slopes of the Himalayas and within the kingdom of Kosala. According to some versions, it stood on the bank of a lake near a river. In the Chinese translation of the Buddhist texts the river is called Bhagira or Bhagirathi or Ganges.<sup>3</sup> According to the Ceylonese chronicles the Rohiṇī flowed between the territories of the Śākyas and Koliyas. As tradition

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Beal, *Travels of Fah-hien and Sung-Yun, Buddhist pilgrims from China to India (400 A.D. and 518 A.D.)* (London, 1869), p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (1905), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Watters, 'Kapilavastu in the Buddhist Books', *Journ. Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1898, p. 336.



says, on one occasion Buddha is said to have averted an imminent strife between the Śākya and Koliya over the distribution of the waters of the Rohiṇī. Thus, there is no consensus of opinion about the existence of a river by the side of the capital town of Kapilavastu.

Evident as it is, all this meagre information has practically no bearing on the location of Kapilavastu which is still a lost site. Whatever idea about the situation of this city with reference to Śrāvastī, the capital of the ancient Kosala, Lumbinī, the birth-place of Buddha, and the natal towns of Krakuchchhanda and Kanakamuni is available is primarily due to Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang. These two Chinese pilgrims, however, did not notice any river in the Kapilavastu region. Nor did they allude, curiously enough, to the *stūpa* erected over the body-relics of Buddha. On archaeological evidence Śrāvastī and Lumbinī have been identified with Saheth-Maheth (Districts Gonda and Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh, India) and Rummidei (District Bhairhwa, Nepalese Tarai) respectively. Though two fragments of the upper portion of an Aśokan pillar (one fragment with an inscription recording the enlargement of the *stūpa* of Kanakamuni, Aśoka's personal visit to the spot and the erection of the pillar) have been found by the side of a tank called Nigali-sagar, nearly 14 miles north-west of Rummidei, none of the two is *in situ* and the lower part of the pillar is missing. But the lower part of an Aśokan pillar by the side of a ruined *stūpa*, presumably of Aśokan origin, stands *in situ* at Gotihawa, 7 miles south-west of Nigali-sagar. In spite of our having the fixed point at Rummidei and pillar-fragments at Nigali-sagar and Gotihawa, which considerably narrow down the area to be probed for Kapilavastu, the site is not yet indisputably identified.

One of the reasons is the difference between Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang on the location of Kapilavastu, with reference to Lumbinī and the natal towns of Krakuchchhanda and Kanakamuni, two of the Mānushi-Buddhas who preceded Gautama Buddha. According to Fa-hien, Kapilavastu is somewhat less than a *yojana* east of Kanakamuni's town, the latter situated less than a *yojana* north of Na-pi-ka, Krakuchchhanda's town, which is 12 *yojanas* south-east of Śrāvastī. Hiuen Tsang places Kapilavastu 500 *li* (800 *li* according to the *Life*) south-east of the town of Kāśyapa near Śrāvastī and 50 *li* north of Krakuchchhanda's town, the latter being 30 *li* south-west of the town of Kanakamuni. Though the pilgrims agree tolerably on the distance between the native towns of these three Buddhas, they differ materially regarding the directions. Thus, Kapilavastu, according to Fa-hien, was to the east of Kanakamuni's town and north-east of Na-pi-ka and, according to Hiuen Tsang, to the north-west of Kanakamuni's town and north of Na-pi-ka. Fa-hien places Lumbinī 50 *li* eastward of Kapilavastu, while Hiuen Tsang took bearings from Śara-kūpa (Arrow-well), 30 (or 32) *li* south-east of Kapilavastu, to Lumbinī, the latter being 80 or 90 *li* north-east of Śara-kūpa.

#### PREVIOUS WORKS AND THEORIES

This embarrassing discrepancy has given rise to several speculations on the location of Kapilavastu. The identifications of Lassen, Cunningham and Carlyle with some sites in Districts Gorakhpur and Basti, which were based mainly on the distance and bearing of Kapilavastu from Śrāvastī, were held untenable since the last decade of the nineteenth century which saw the discovery of two fragments of an inscribed pillar by the side of a tank called Nigali-sagar (4½ miles north-east of Taulihawa in Nepalese Tarai), the lower portion of an Aśokan pillar *in situ* and a *stūpa* at Gotihawa (2½ miles south-west of Taulihawa), a pillar *in situ* with the record of Aśoka at Lumbinī (14½ miles south-east of Taulihawa) and a conspicuous *stūpa*, with exceptionally precious deposits and reliquaries, at Piprahwa (District Basti, Uttar Pradesh, India), 9 miles west-south-west from Lumbinī, near the Indo-Nepalese frontier. One of the reliquaries from Piprahwa, as is well known, bears an inscription, in Maurya Brāhmi characters, recording the deposit of relics of Buddha (or of



the Śākya as interpreted by Fleet). These discoveries provided a great fillip in the field of research, and scholars turned their attention towards the Nepalese Tarai for the sites of the towns of Buddha, Krakuchchhanda and Kanakamuni.

The first attempt after these discoveries was by A. Führer, deputed in 1896 to advise the Nepalese in the excavation of the alleged *stūpa* of Kanakamuni by the side of Nigali-sagar. Führer gave a vague definition of the site of Kapilavastu for an extensive area, 7 miles long and 3 to 4 miles broad, in between the village of Amauli, Baidauli, Harnampur, Bikuli, Sivagarhi, Tilaura-kot, Ramghat, Rampura, Ahirauli, Srinagar, Jagadishpur and Nagrahah.<sup>4</sup> He placed the natal town of Kanakamuni near the hamlets of Tilaura and Gobari and falsely claimed a non-existing *stūpa* near the pillar-fragments of Nigali-sagar as the *nirvāṇa-stūpa* of this Mānushi-Buddha. Krakuchchhanda's town was identified with the mounds between Kodan and Gotihawa and his *nirvāṇa-stūpa* with the one by the side of the pillar of Gotihawa. During his next visit in 1897 and 1898 Führer located the place of the massacre of the Śākya on the bank of a tank called Sagar near Sagrahawa where he helped the Nepalese in excavating and demolishing eighteen structures, many of which yielded some deposits.<sup>5</sup>

In 1899 P.C. Mukherji, commissioned to explore and excavate the area,<sup>6</sup> declared Tilaura-kot as Kapilavastu and supported Führer in his identifications of the massacre-stūpas at Sagrahawa and the *nirvāṇa-stūpa* of Krakuchchhanda at Gotihawa. He identified Araura-kot near Nigali-sagar as the town of Kanakamuni, as he felt that the pillar, though not *in situ*, could not have been removed far away.

V.A. Smith, in order to reconcile the conflicting statements of Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang, felt that the remains at Piprahwa (District Basti, Uttar Pradesh) were shown to Fa-hien as Kapilavastu by his guides, whereas the fortified mound of Tilaura-kot was presented to Hiuen Tsang as such by his guides.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, Smith suggested that Kanakamuni's town was either at Sisania Panre or at Palta Devi and Krakuchchhanda's natal town either at Palta Devi or near Chandapar.<sup>8</sup> Gotihawa (Gutivā) was held to 'mark the banyan grove (Nyagrodhārāma) which lay half a mile to the south' of the city of Kapilavastu outside the latter's southern boundary.<sup>9</sup>

T.W. Rhys Davids took Tilaura-kot and Piprahwa to be the old and new cities of Kapilavastu respectively, the latter being built after the destruction of the old city by Viṣṇudabha.<sup>10</sup>

According to J. F. Fleet, the inscription on one of the reliquaries of the Piprahwa *stūpa* records the enshrining of relics, not of Buddha as supposed by Bühler and Rhys Davids, but of his kinsmen (i.e. the Śākya of Kapilavastu) and their sisters, wives and children who had been slaughtered by Viṣṇudabha. Piprahwa *stūpa*, accordingly, marked a portion of Kapilavastu or some spot in the immediate outskirts of the capital.<sup>11</sup>

W. Hoey, who did not agree with Fleet's identification, felt that when Smith 'admits that the two pilgrims must have seen the same towns of Krakuchchhanda and Kanakamuni, his theory that they saw two different Kapilavastus is thin.' He identified Na-pi-ka, the birth-place of Krakuchchhanda, with Nibi near Kramkul (Grankul near Chandapar) where

<sup>4</sup> A. Führer, *Monograph on Buddha Sakyanuni's Birth-Place in the Nepalese Tarai*, Arch. Surv. North. Ind., VI (Allahabad, 1897), p. 44.

<sup>5</sup> *Prog. Rep. Arch. Surv., N.-W. Provinces and Oudh Circle, 1897-98*, pp. 1 and 2.

<sup>6</sup> P. C. Mukherji, *A Report on a Tour of Exploration of the Antiquities in the Tarai, Nepal*, Archaeological Survey of India, Imperial Series, XXVI, part I (Calcutta, 1901).

<sup>7</sup> *Prefatory Note to P. C. Mukherji's A Report on a Tour of Exploration of the Antiquities in the Tarai, Nepal*, p. 10.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Buddhist India* (London, 1917), p. 18, foot-note 1.

<sup>11</sup> J. F. Fleet, 'The Inscription on the Piprahwa Vase', *Journ. Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1906, pp. 149-80.



he saw a vast mound and the mound at Parigawan, 2½ miles south-west of Nibi, with the *stūpa* commemorating the spot where Krakuchchhanda first met his father on return after enlightenment.<sup>12</sup>

W. Vost tried to establish that the pilgrims knew only one city of Kapilavastu corresponding to Tilaura-kot and the ruins to the south of it, Krakuchchhanda's town comprised the remains at Sisanihavā Pande (Sisania), Kanakamuni's town represented the remains at Gotihawa and his supposed town Nyagrodhika by the side of the Banyan grove (Nyagrodhārāma) comprised the Piprahwa (District Basti) remains.<sup>13</sup> He emended Hiuen Tsang's direction of north-east into north-west for the town of Kanakamuni in relation to Krakuchchhanda's town and identified the tank of Lahari Kudan (Kodan) with the *hasti-garta* beyond the southern moat of the city of Kapilavastu and the four mounds on its sides with the *stūpa* near the *hasti-garta*, two temples (one with representation of Prince Gautama and the other with the likeness of Yaśodharā and Rāhula), site of the school-room of Gautama and the temple with the representation of a sick man.

With all these speculations, research and explorations, we are yet uncertain about the exact location of Kapilavastu. Mukherji's identification of Tilaura-kot with Kapilavastu has been accepted by the Nepalese who generally refer to the modern township of Taulihawa, 2½ miles from Tilaura-kot, as Kapilavastu. In one-inch-to-a-mile survey sheet 63 M/2 Kapilavastu is bracketed below Taulihawa.

It is impossible to reconcile the divergent statements of the two Chinese pilgrims as regards the distances and bearings of Kapilavastu in relation to the towns of Kanakamuni and Krakuchchhanda and Lumbini. Either the testimony of one of them is wrong, or, as Smith suggested, the pilgrims were guided to two different sites. Though Smith's suggestion about the identity of Hiuen Tsang's Kapilavastu with Tilaura-kot and of Fa-hien's Kapilavastu with Piprahwa is tenable as regards the distance in the former case and both distance and bearing in the latter case with reference to Lumbini, the fact that both the pilgrims noticed nearly a dozen identical Buddhist memorials at or near Kapilavastu makes one feel that they are describing one and the same place. It appears, therefore, that one of the pilgrims committed mistakes in respect of direction and bearing.

#### RECENT WORKS

In 1962, I, along with some members of the Archaeological Survey of India, was deputed by the Government of India to carry out explorations and excavations in the Lumbini-Tilaura-kot region of the Nepalese Tarai. Though we explored a large part of the area which formed part of the ancient country of Kapilavastu and excavated extensively at Kodan (also known as Lori-ki-Kudan, Lahari Kudan and Lori-Kudan) and limitedly at Tilaura-kot, we did not find anything tangible in favour of the identification of Tilaura-kot with Kapilavastu. However, I gathered certain facts disputing some of the theories put forward by earlier scholars in respect of other ancient places near the town of Kapilavastu which are enumerated below. During my deputation period I had also the occasion to visit Piprahwa and its immediate neighbourhood.

Führer located the ruins of Krakuchchhanda's natal town in the mounds near Lori-ki-Kudan (Kodan), 1¼ mile south-west of Taulihawa and nearly 1¼ mile north-east of Gotihawa. According to him, the four mounds at this place represent the three *stūpas* and monasteries mentioned by Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang. Mukherji also held the mounds representing *stūpas* and monasteries. General His Highness Prince Khadga Sumsher Jung Rana Bahadur while

<sup>12</sup> *Journ. Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1906, p. 454. The mounds at Kramkul and Parigawan need close examination. Unfortunately, I could not visit these places.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 553-80.



regarding the mounds as *stūpas* and monasteries felt that 'it must have been the place where Buddha held athletic sports; if not, the place belong to his *Gosthīs*, i.e., relatives.' W. Vost took Kodan as suburbs of Kapilavastu and identified (i) the northernmost mound with the *stūpa* adjoining the spot where 'the elephant (thrown by Gautama Buddha) falling on the ground caused a deep and wide ditch', (ii) the next mound (which is the largest of all) with the remains of two temples (one with the representation of Gautama and the other with the likeness of Yaśodharā and Rāhula) which Hiuen Tsang saw by the side of the *hasti-garta*, (iii) the third mound with the site of the school-room of Gautama and (iv) the fourth mound with 'the remains of the temple which lay without the south gate (of Kapilavastu), and contained a representation of a sick man.' The tank on the banks of which these mounds are located has been identified by him with the *hasti-garta* (pit caused by the fall of the elephant).

All these presumptions have been proved baseless by our excavations at the mounds at Kodan which can neither be regarded as the natal town of Krakuchchanda nor a part (or suburbs) of Kapilavastu for want of vestiges of Buddhist character. Of the four mounds, one is reduced to the last stage of decay. The excavations at the remaining three mounds yielded the remains of three brick Brahmanical temples which were originally decorated with various motifs carved on the facing brickwork. None of these temples is earlier than the eighth century A.D. The tank was the offshoot of the constructions of the temples which demanded a huge quantity of earth not only for the mortar and bricks, but for the extensive filling material in the foundation of the temples.

Führer identified the site of the massacre of the Śākya (located by Hiuen Tsang to the north-east of the capital) with Sagrahawa which is nearly 3 miles north-east from Tilaurakot. Here on the banks of a large tank (locally called Sagar) Führer, apart from destroying a large part of the ruins of an impressive structure which he identified with the *stūpa* of Mahānāman with an attached monastery, removed seventeen comparatively small brick structures down to their foundations in search of relics. Führer's attempts to associate the names of eighteen Śākyas including Mahānāman with these eighteen structures on the false claim of the finds of writings in pre-Aśokan characters on the vases, lids and bricks of the so-called relic-chambers were foiled by V.A. Smith who paid a surprise visit during the excavation and exposed the forgery fully to the public in time.<sup>14</sup> Mukherji<sup>15</sup> and Smith<sup>16</sup> were, nevertheless, in favour of Führer's identification of the site with the place of the scene of the Śākyas' massacre. They also held the seventeen structures as *stūpas*, because several of them yielded precious objects like gold and silver pieces, *nāga* figures, semiprecious stones, gold flowers, etc., generally deposited within vases (which were in most cases found buried in the ground immediately below the central lotus-marked brick of the bottom course of the foundation brickwork). The largest structure (Mahānāman's *stūpa* with an attached monastery according to Führer) was described by Mukherji as a *stūpa* attached to a cruciform monument. The foundation bricks of some of the structures bore the representation of weapons in which Smith found a justification for identifying the site with 'the supposed scene of the slaughter of the Śākyas', as the weapons indicated 'that the persons whose cremation is commemorated fell in battle.'<sup>17</sup>

The site of Sagrahawa did not yield any objects specifically Buddhist. After studying the extant remains and available reports and unpublished drawings (now in the custody of Northern Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India) prepared by Bhairava Buksh, Führer's draftsman, I have come to the firm conclusion that the structures exposed and destroyed by

<sup>14</sup> *Annual Progress Report, Archaeological Survey, North-western Provinces and Oudh Circle for the year ending 30th June 1899*, pp. 1 and 2.

<sup>15</sup> P. C. Mukherji, *op. cit.*, pp. 54 and 55.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Prefatory note, p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.



Führer did not represent the *stūpas* erected in memory of the Śākya who had been slaughtered by Viṣṇuśakha in the lifetime of Buddha.<sup>18</sup> Though the religious affiliation of the structures at Sagrahawa could not be established in the absence of the find of any cult object, it is certain that these structures were not early in date. The decorated bricks of the structure numbered 2 are essentially similar to those of the early mediaeval Temple 1 exposed by us at Kodan. The plan of the largest structure (*stūpa*-monastery of Führer and *stūpa* attached to a cruciform monument according to Mukherji) is too analogous to that of Temples 1 and 2 at Kodan to have been far anterior in time. This particular structure was definitely a temple whatever its religious affiliation might have been. Smith's interpretation of the representation of the weapons is untenable, as the weapons represent the *āyudhas* of the *dīkṣālas* to be depicted on the foundation-bricks for which there are clear prescriptions in the mediaeval texts on architecture. The nature of the deposits within the vases (*nidhi-kumbhas*) also attests to the following of the Śāstric injunctions in respect of the deposit of precious things (*ratna-nyāsa*) in the foundations of the temples.

Smith's tentative identification of Gotihawa with the site of Nyagrodhārāma, which lay 3 or 4 *li* south of the Kapilavastu town, does not seem justified. Hiuen Tsang did not notice any Aśokan pillar at Nyagrodhārāma. Gotihawa, with the lower portion of the Aśokan pillar and *stūpa*, certainly represents the venue of the supposed *nirvāṇa* of either Kanakamuni or Krakuchchanda. It is very likely that the two fragments (one with Aśoka's inscription recording the enlargement of the *stūpa* of Kanakamuni and erection of the pillar) of the upper portion of an Aśokan pillar, at present lying at Nigali-sagar,<sup>19</sup> formed the upper parts of the pillar *in situ* at Gotihawa. As is well-known, the upper portion of the Gotihawa pillar is missing, but a major fragment of the bell-shaped capital was found here (removed to the Taulihawa Inspection Bungalow). The corresponding lower part of the Nigali-sagar pillar and also the capital are missing. The fragments of the Nigali-sagar pillar are smaller than the Gotihawa pillar in diameter, so that the former can easily be the upper parts of the latter, all these fragments being tapering and of identical stone. If this presumption is correct, the *stūpa* (which by the size of the bricks looks Aśokan) in front of the pillar at Gotihawa is the one of Kanakamuni which Aśoka claims to have enlarged in the inscription on the lower of the two pillar-fragments at Nigali-sagar. In this connection it may be noted that Gotihawa, which is east of Śrāvastī, does not fit in with Fa-hien's bearing (south-east) of Krakuchchanda's place in relation to Śrāvastī.

It may be remarked that Mukherji did not mention any movable antiquities from Tilaura-kot specifically Buddhist. There is also no justification for regarding the structures exposed by him, except the one outside the eastern gate of the fortified mound of Tilaura-kot, as Buddhist monasteries and *stūpas*. The so-called sixteen-sided *stūpa* with an attached portico was evidently a late temple of unknown religious affiliation. My limited excavation at Tilaura-kot also did not yield anything to suggest the identification of Tilaura-kot with Kapilavastu, though it is certain that there are remains of *stūpas* in the immediate neighbourhood of the fortified mound of Tilaura-kot. One of the reasons of Mukherji's identification of Tilaura-kot with Kapilavastu is based on the identification of the structures at Sagrahawa with the *stūpas* commemorating the massacre of the Śākya and the distance and bearing of Sagrahawa in relation to Tilaura-kot. This ground of Mukherji is no longer tenable in view of what has been stated above in respect of Sagrahawa. It is not possible to uphold the theory of Vost that Tilaura-kot represents the site of Kapilavastu and his assumed city Nyagrodhika, supposed to be adjoining the Banyan grove (Nyagrodhārāma), the remains at Piprahwa.

<sup>18</sup> I had occasion to deal with the site in sufficient details in my Report on the Excavations and Explorations in the Nepalese Terai, which is in the press.

<sup>19</sup> As already noted by P. C. Mukherji, the pillar-fragments of Nigali-sagar are not *in situ*. Traces of any ancient vestiges, not to speak of the *stūpa* of Kanakamuni mentioned in the inscription on the pillar, are not in sight within the immediate neighbourhood. The fragments, evidently, were brought from some other site.



## CONCLUSION

Nyagrodhārāma was situated in the outskirts of the capital town of Kapilavastu. According to Hiuen Tsang, the wood of *Ni-ku-lū* (*nyagrodha*) trees was 3 or 4 *li* (i.e. less than a mile) south of Kapilavastu. In case Nyagrodhārāma (not Nyagrodhika town) represents Piprahwa, which is not unlikely, the remains of Kapilavastu are to be sought in the mounds immediately around Piprahwa and not at the distant site of Tilaura-kot. The remains at Piprahwa proper do not represent any city but a Buddhist establishment with monasteries, *stūpas* and other ancillary Buddhist structures.

Piprahwa has a reasonable claim for being a part or suburbs of Kapilavastu. In fact, the inscription on the reliquary found within the main *stūpa* at Piprahwa coupled with Piprahwa's correspondence with Fa-hien's bearing and distance of Kapilavastu in relation to Lumbini raises a strong presumption for Piprahwa and its surrounding villages like Ganwari being the site of Kapilavastu. Piprahwa is 9 miles (as the crow flies) westward (west-south-west, to be more accurate) of Lumbini and  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles (also straight distance) south-east of Gotihawa. There are extensive ruins of Buddhist edifices, including monasteries, in the immediate vicinity of the relic-*stūpa*. There are also mounds near the Sisva tank, about two furlongs east of the relic-*stūpa*. Apart from these, there are ancient habitation-mounds at the neighbouring village of Ganwari which yielded pottery (including sherds of the Northern Black Polished Ware) of the early historical period.

Extensive excavation in the area around the relic-*stūpa* and Ganwari is necessary for getting the indubitable evidence in favour of the identity of Piprahwa and adjoining villages with Kapilavastu. Intensive excavation in the monasteries at Piprahwa is likely to yield some monastic seals or sealings which usually furnish the name of the establishment. If they are found, they will prove conclusively identity of Piprahwa and the adjoining sites with Kapilavastu or otherwise. At the same time if they present the name of an establishment other than Kapilavastu (or Nyagrodhārāma), the information will be a step forward towards the precise location of this lost site.



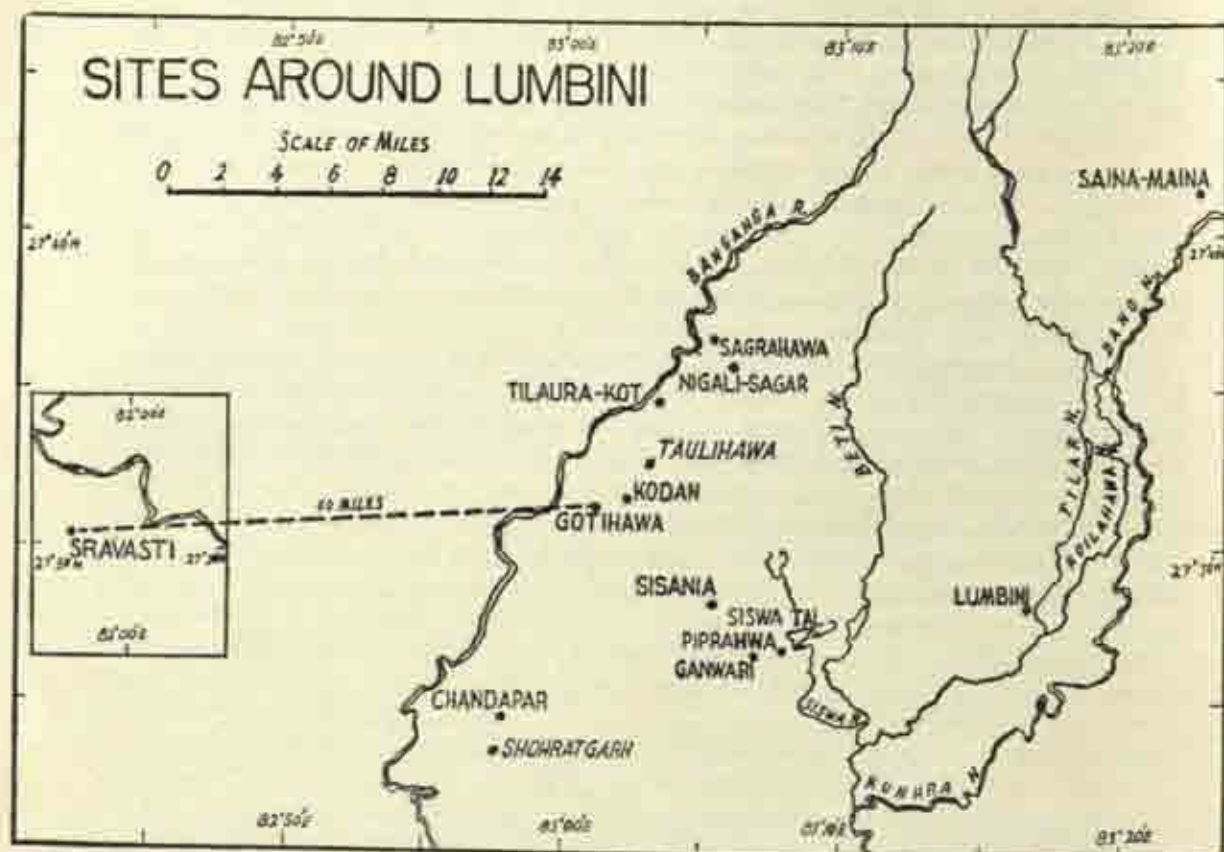


FIG. 21. Sites around Lumbini



# PHOTOGRAPHS



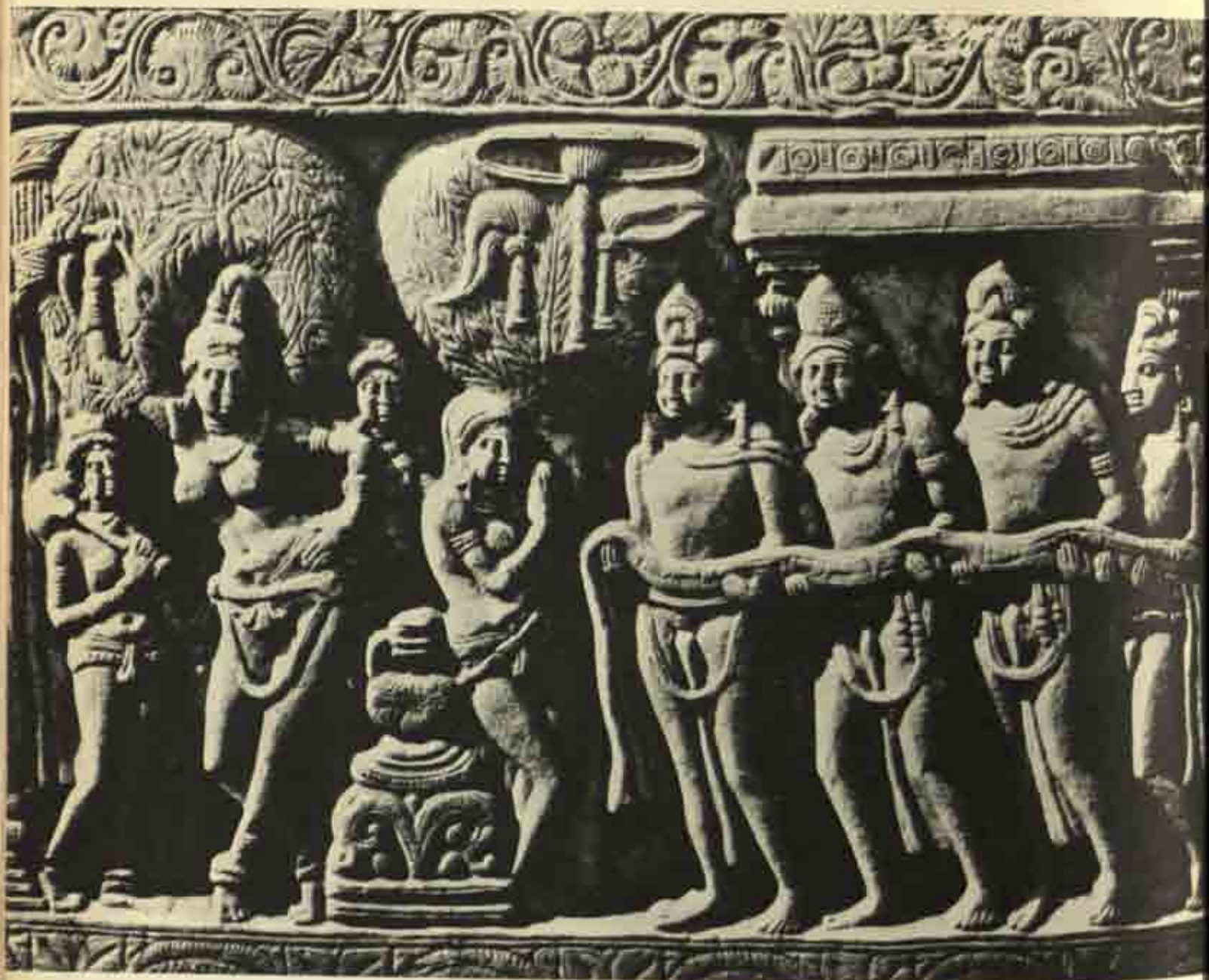






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2. Birth of Gautama and Seven Steps  
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3. Great Departure  
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5. Emaciated figure of Gautama  
(pp. 2, 14 and 116)

4. Adoration of head-dress  
(pp. 2 and 95).





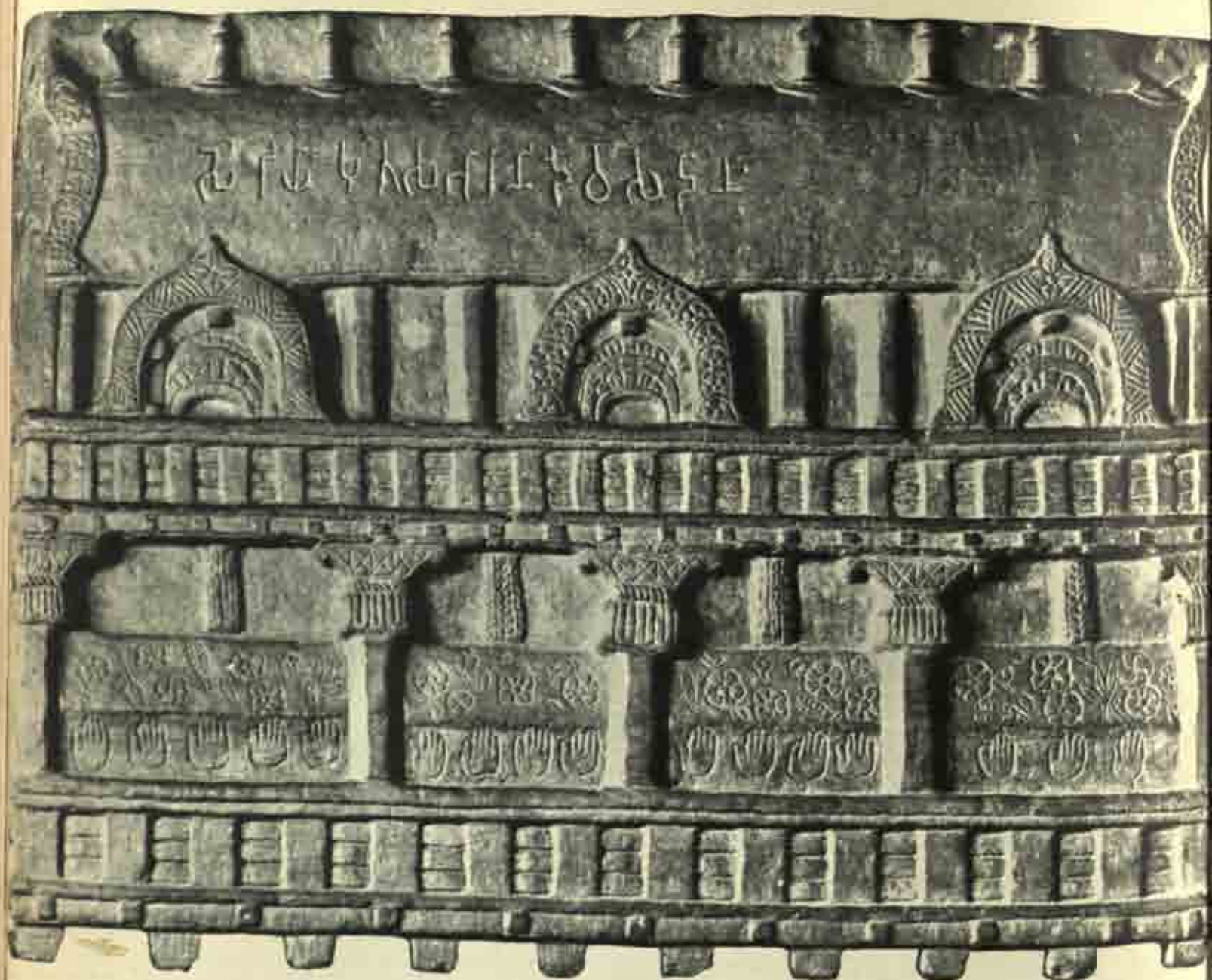
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10. Victory over a serpent  
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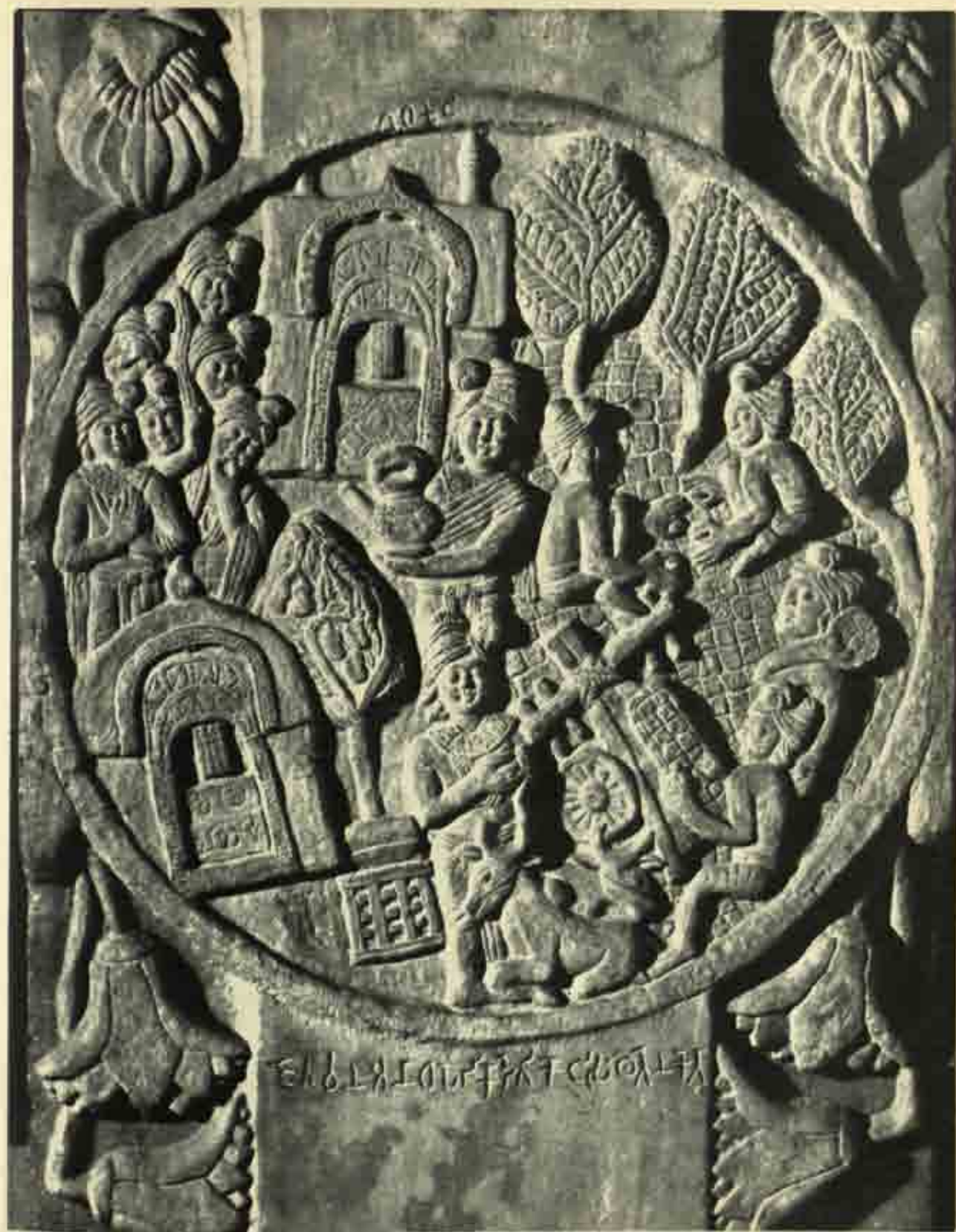
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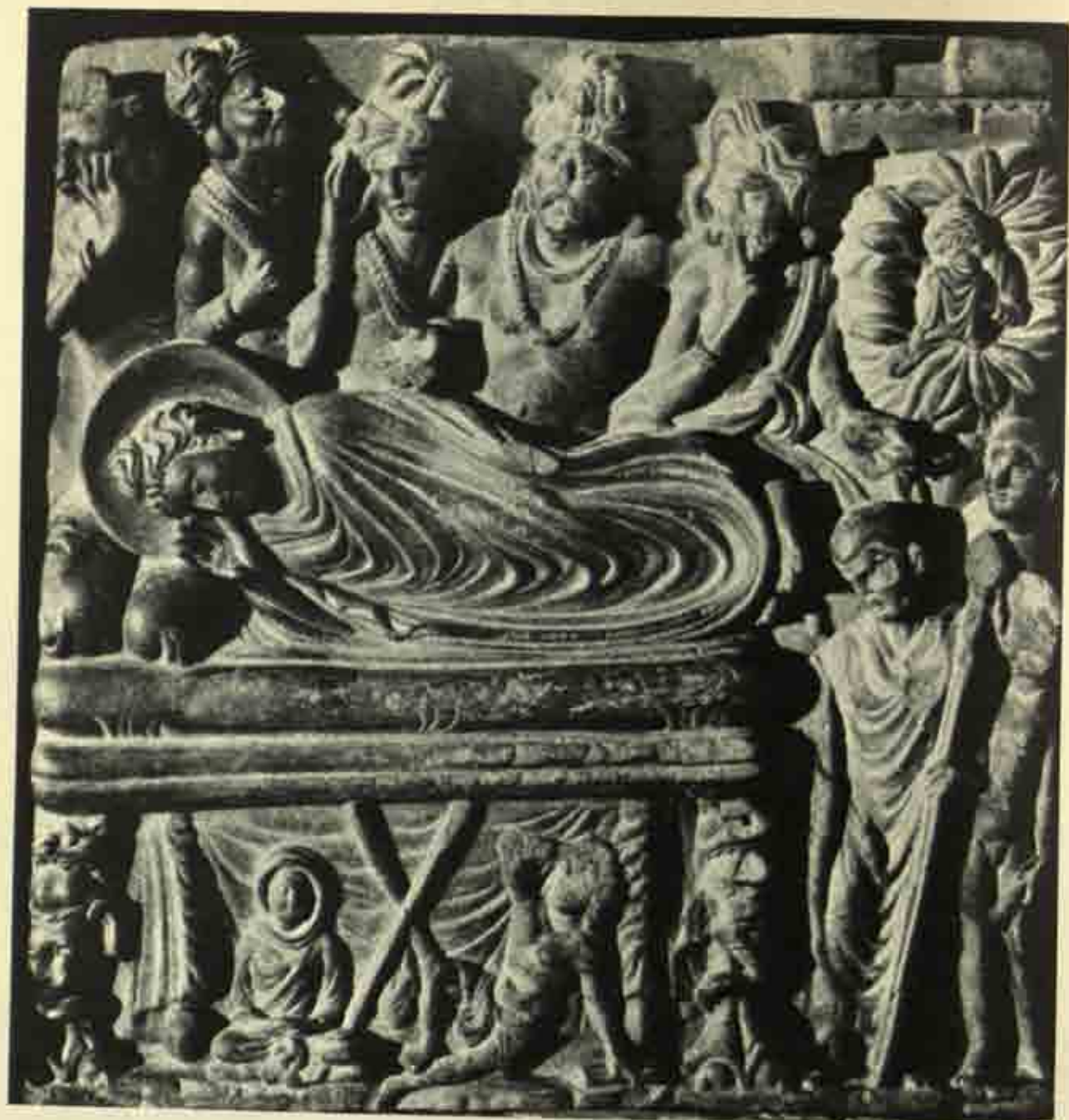


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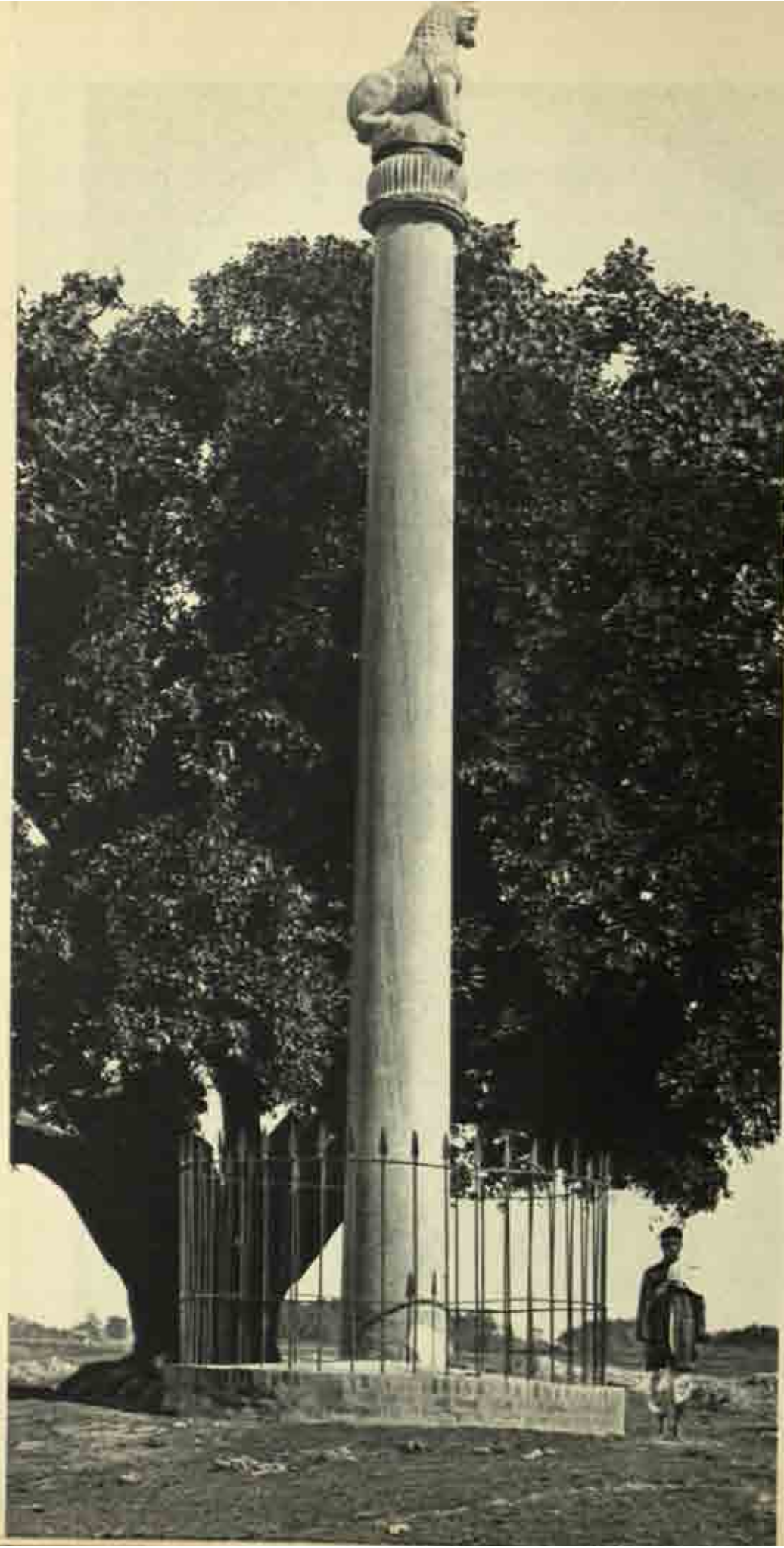
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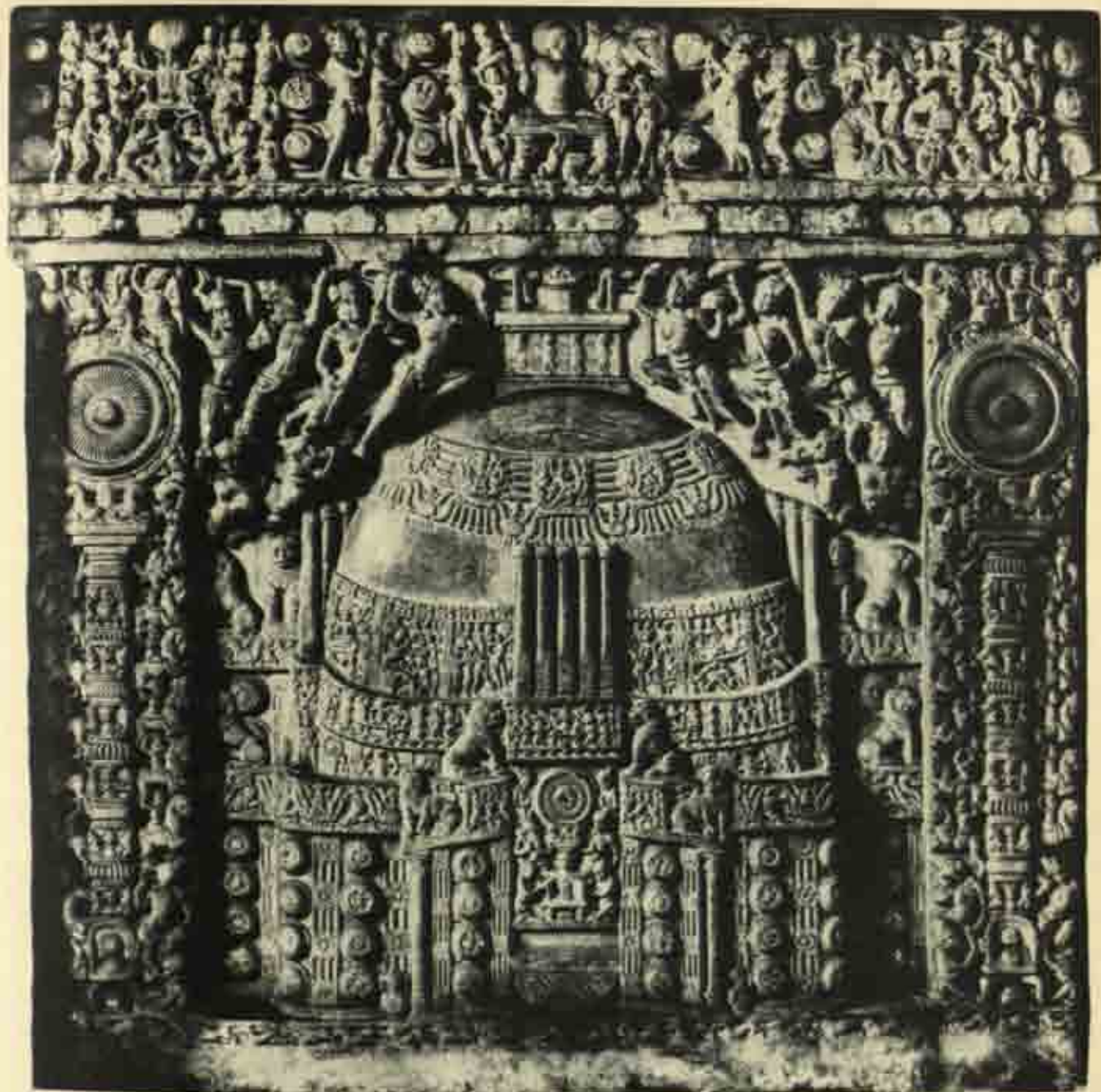
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22. Casing-slab of the Mahāchaitya from Amaravati.  
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40. Miniature stūpa at Bodhi-Gaya  
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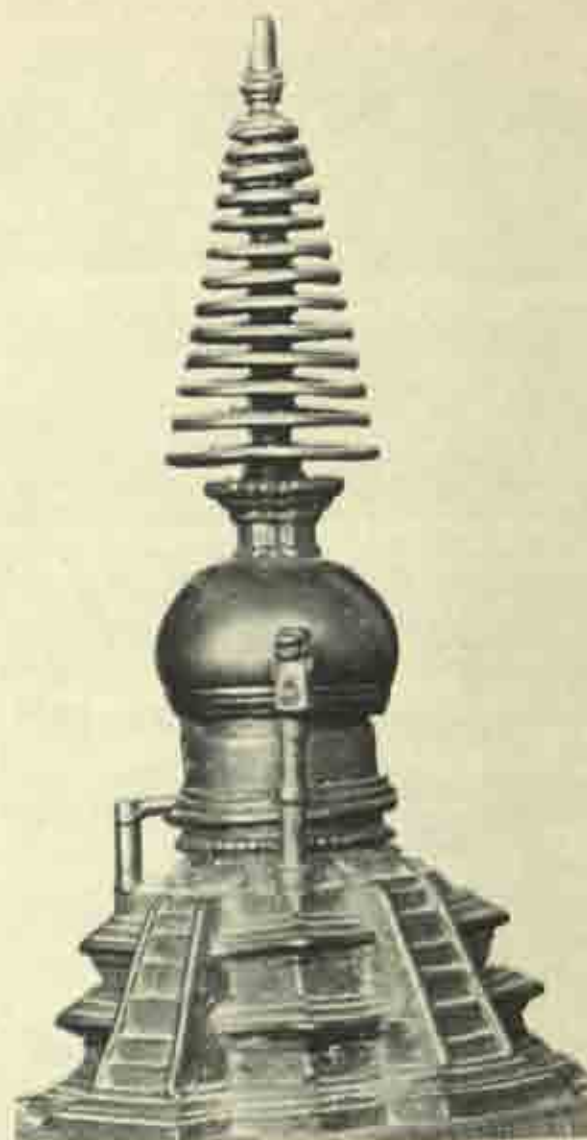


41. *Stupa* inside the core of the colossal terraced *stupa* (photo 48)  
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42. Miniature *stūpa* from Nagapattinam  
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43. Miniature *stūpa* from Kurkihar  
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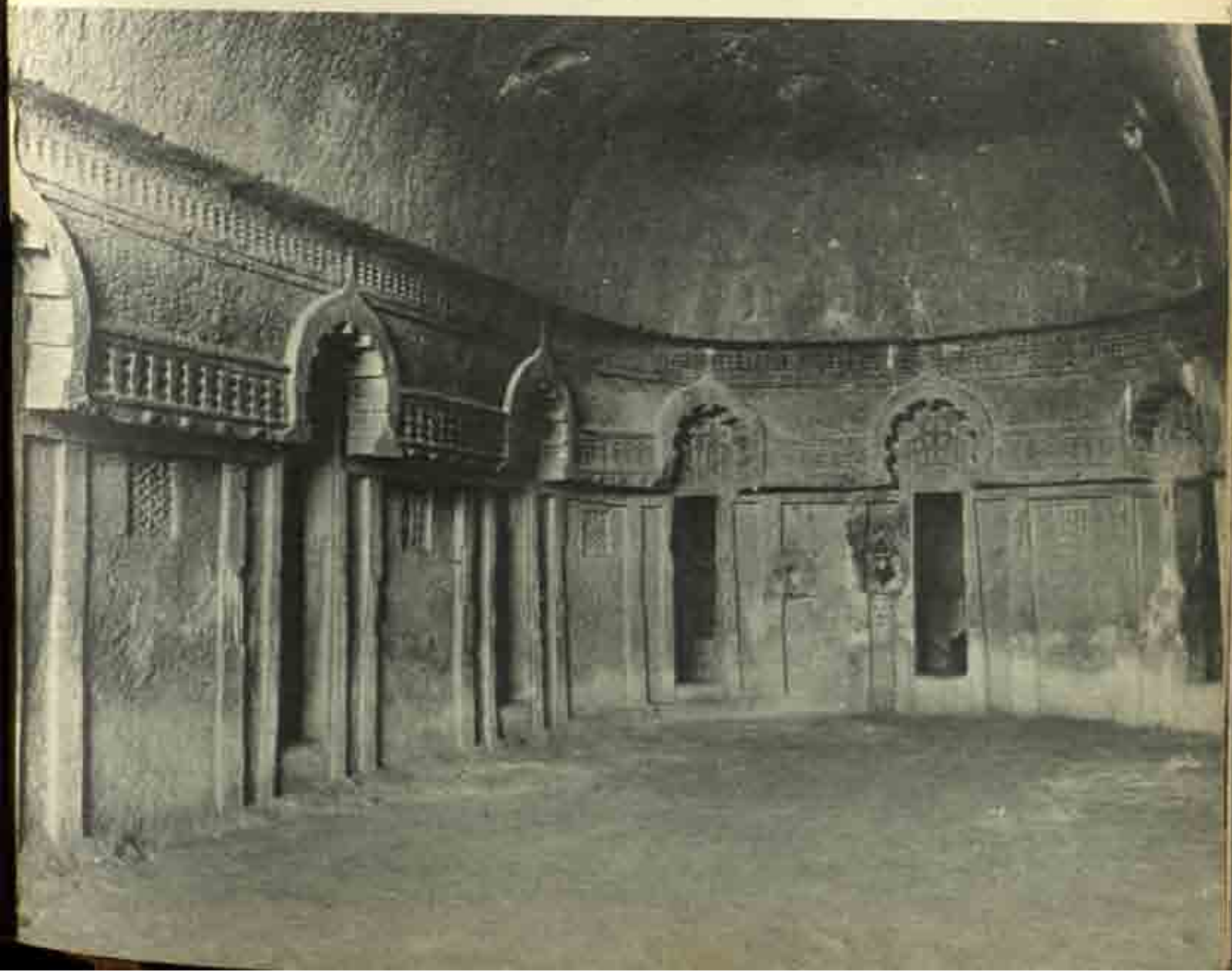
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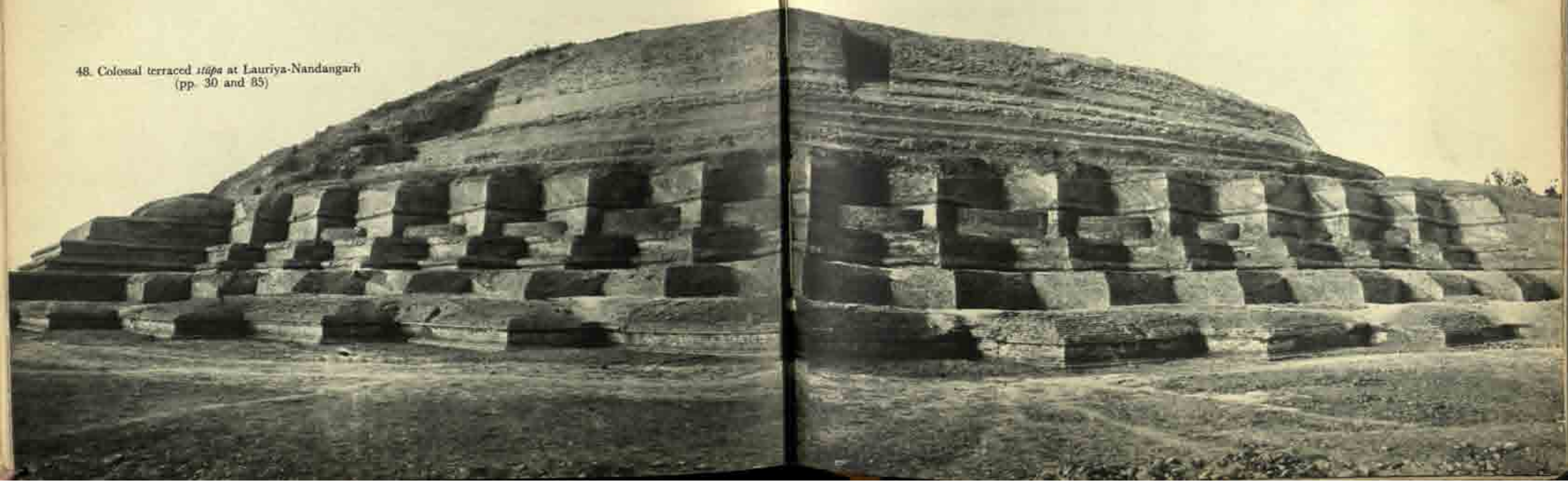


47. Remains of a complete unit at Nagarjunakonda  
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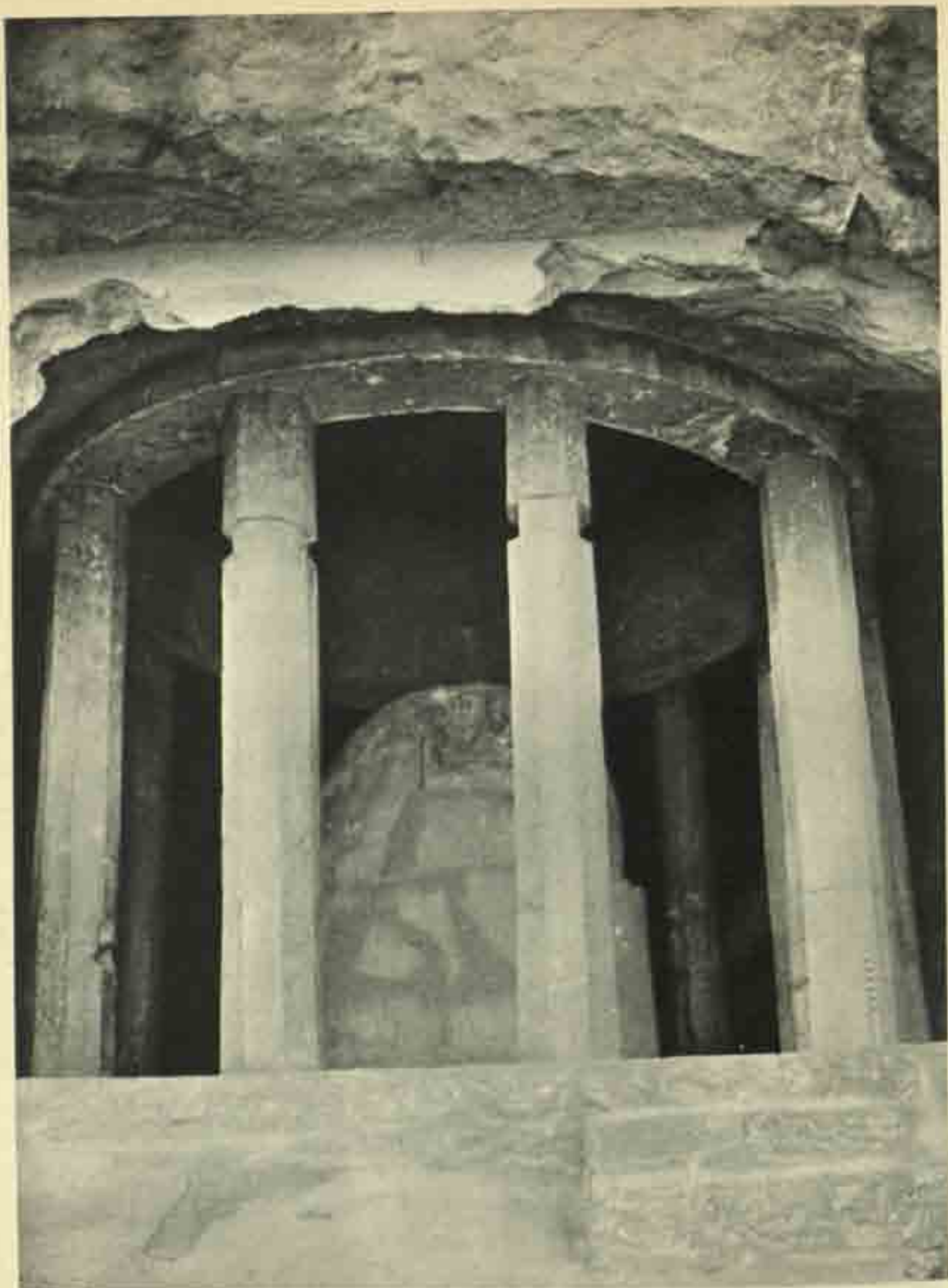


49. Monasteries 1, 1A and 1B at Nālandā.  
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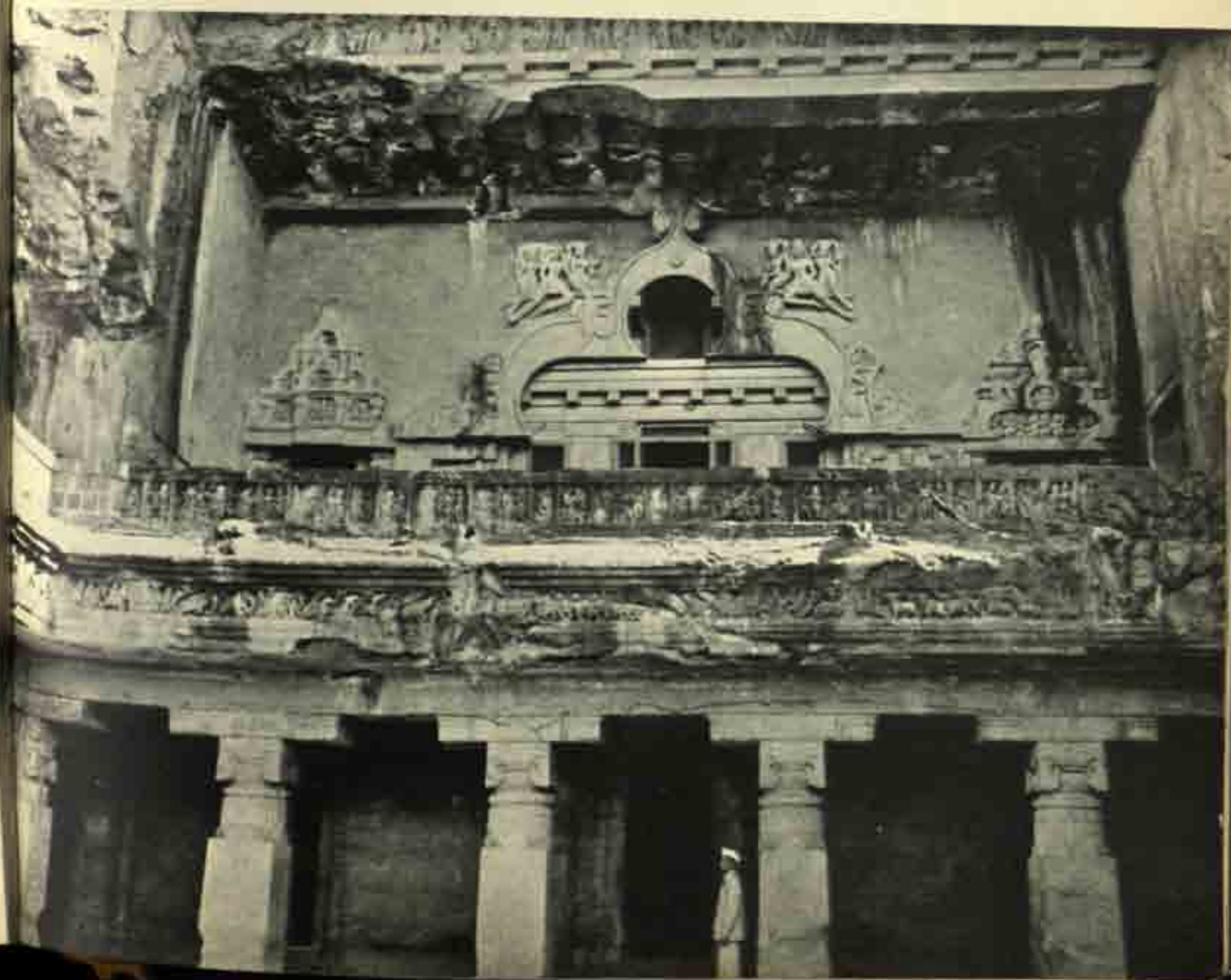




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63. Bronze figures at Lumbini  
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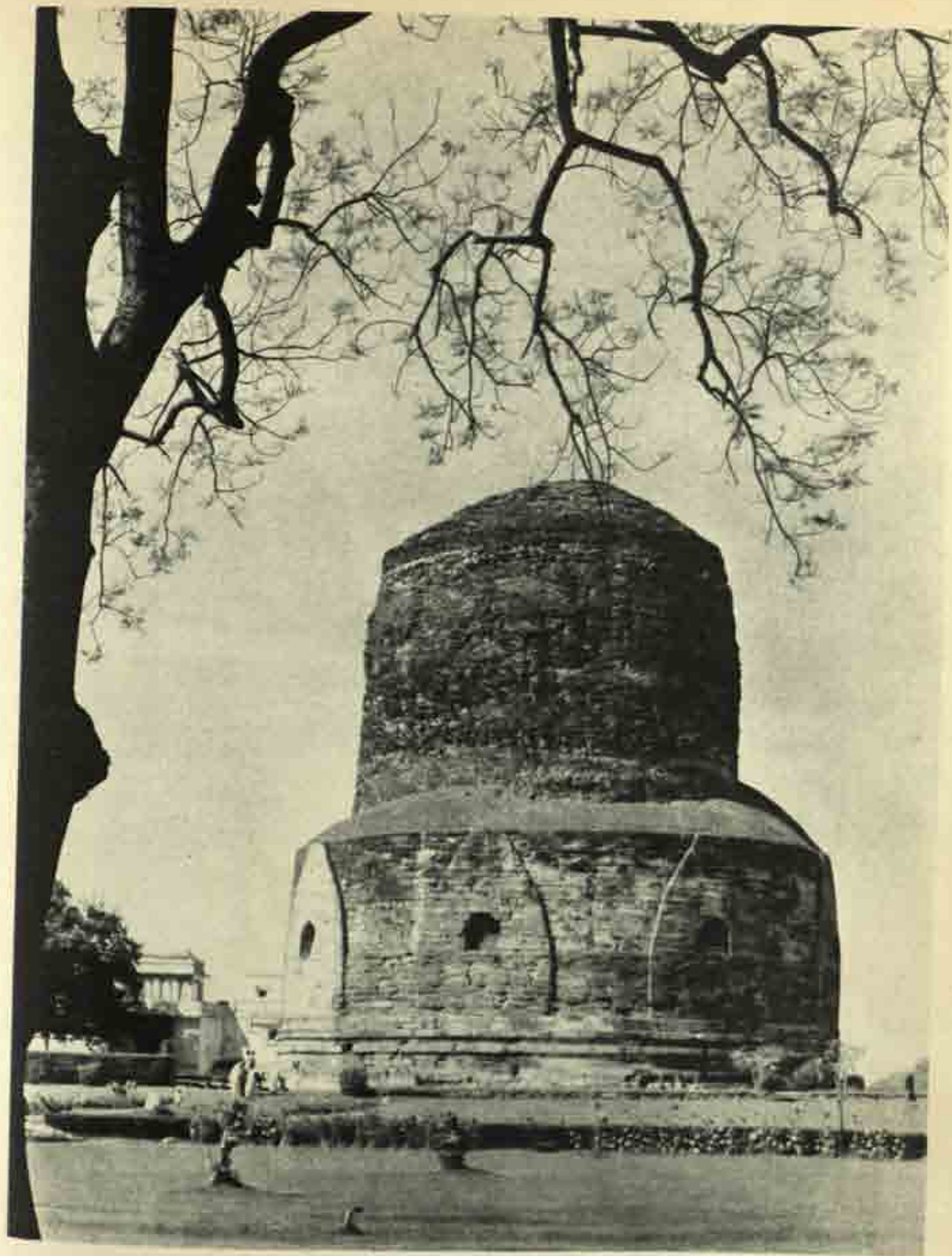
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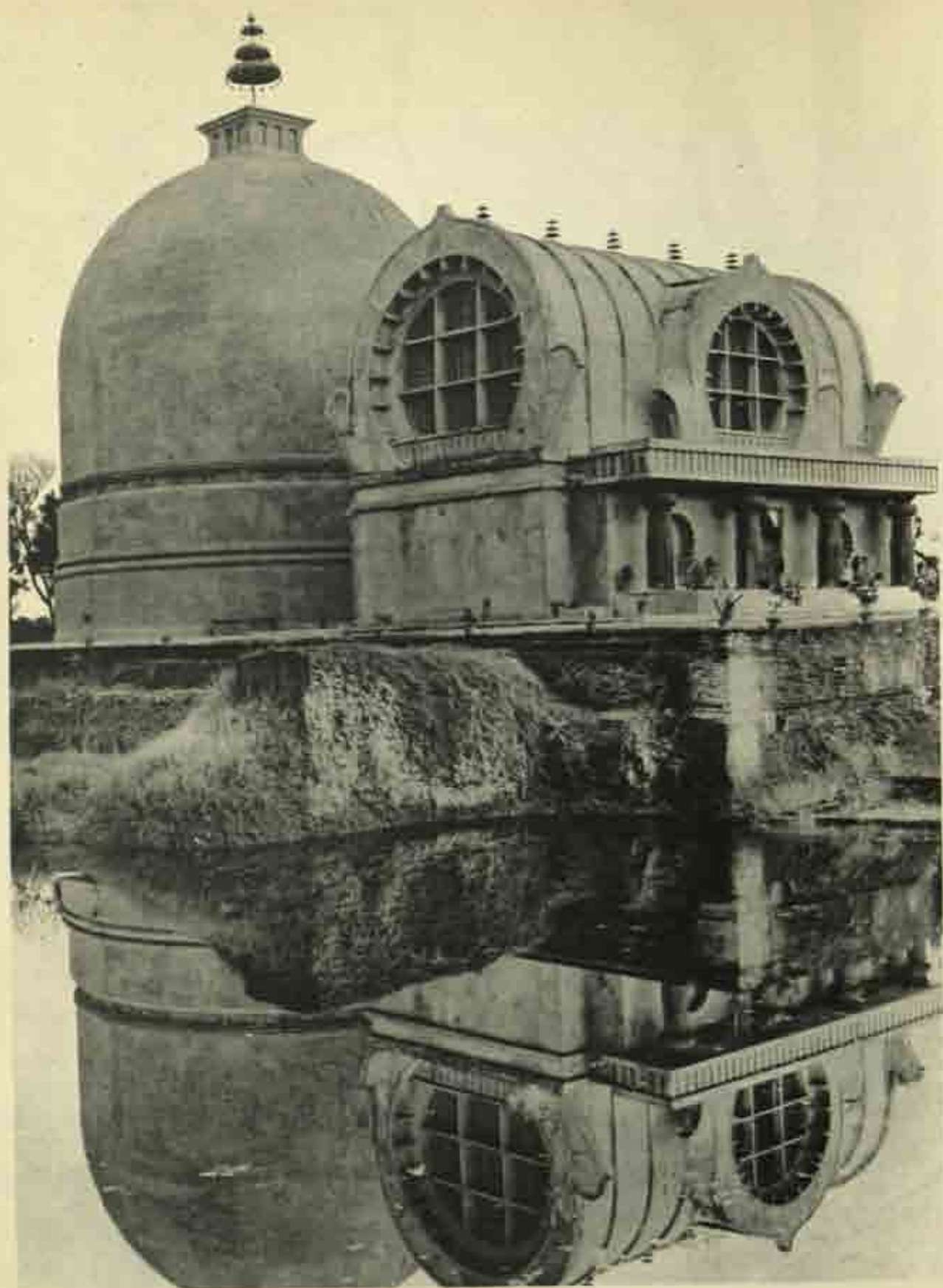
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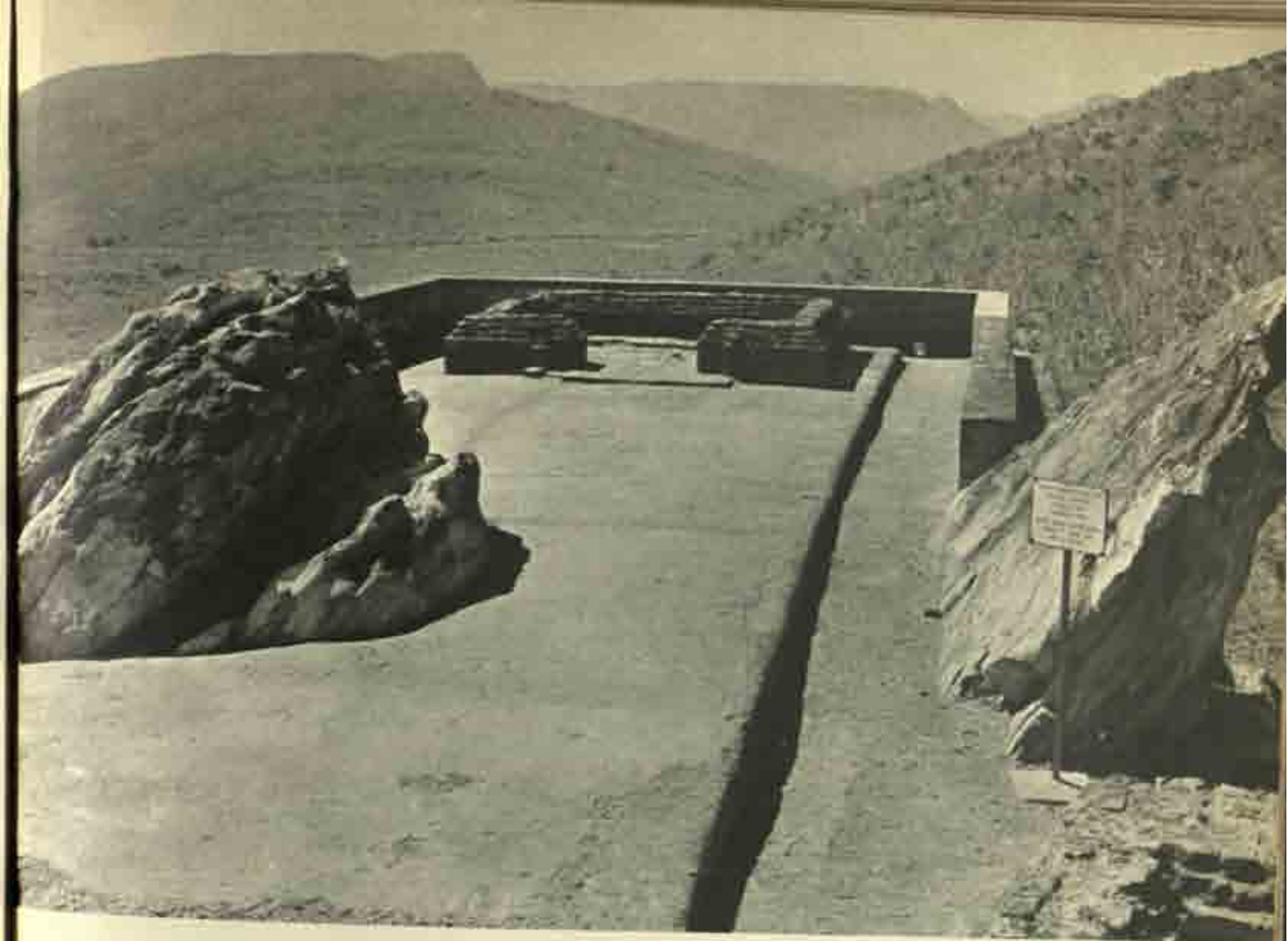
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68. Structural remains on the Gṛidhrakūṭa  
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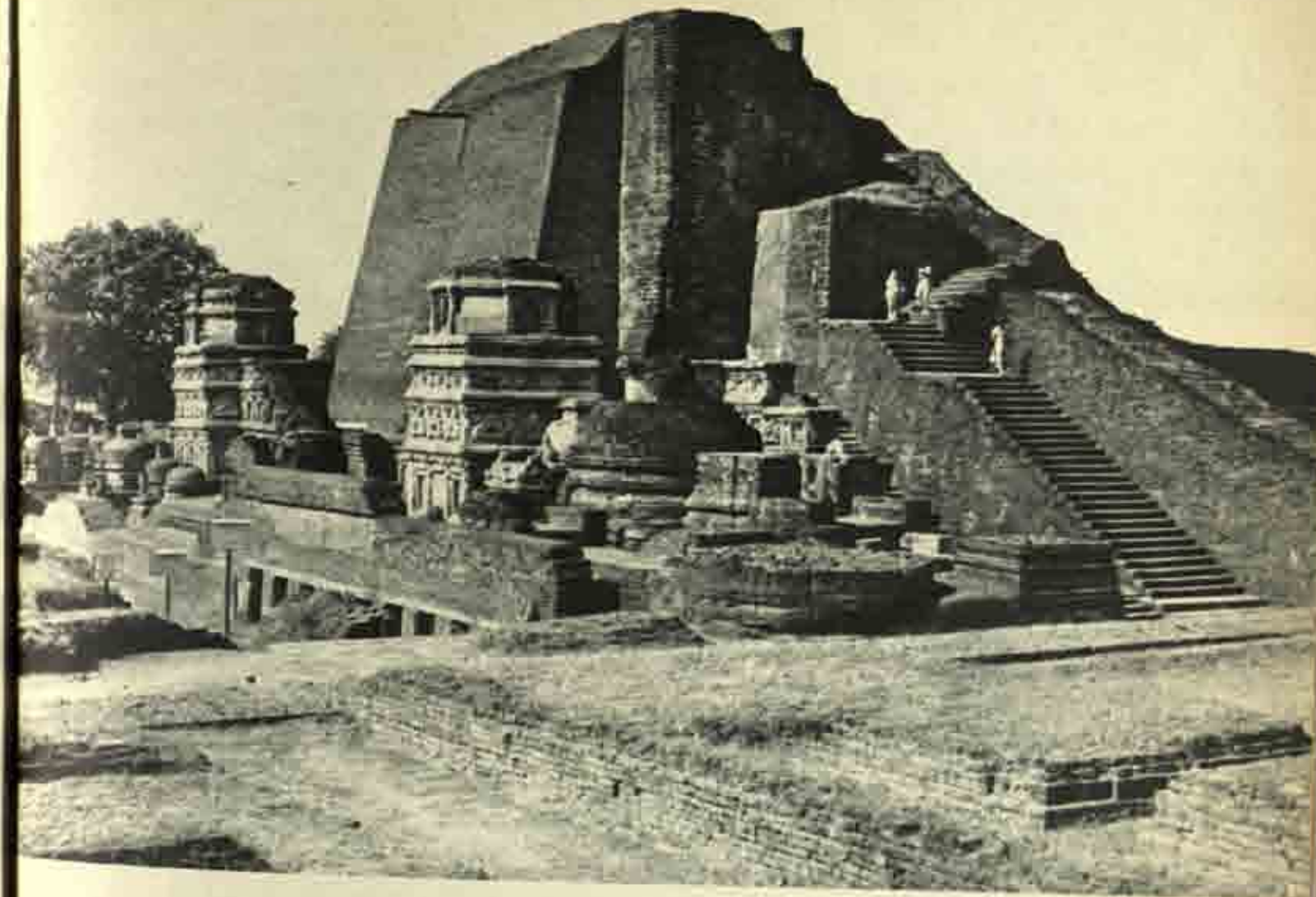
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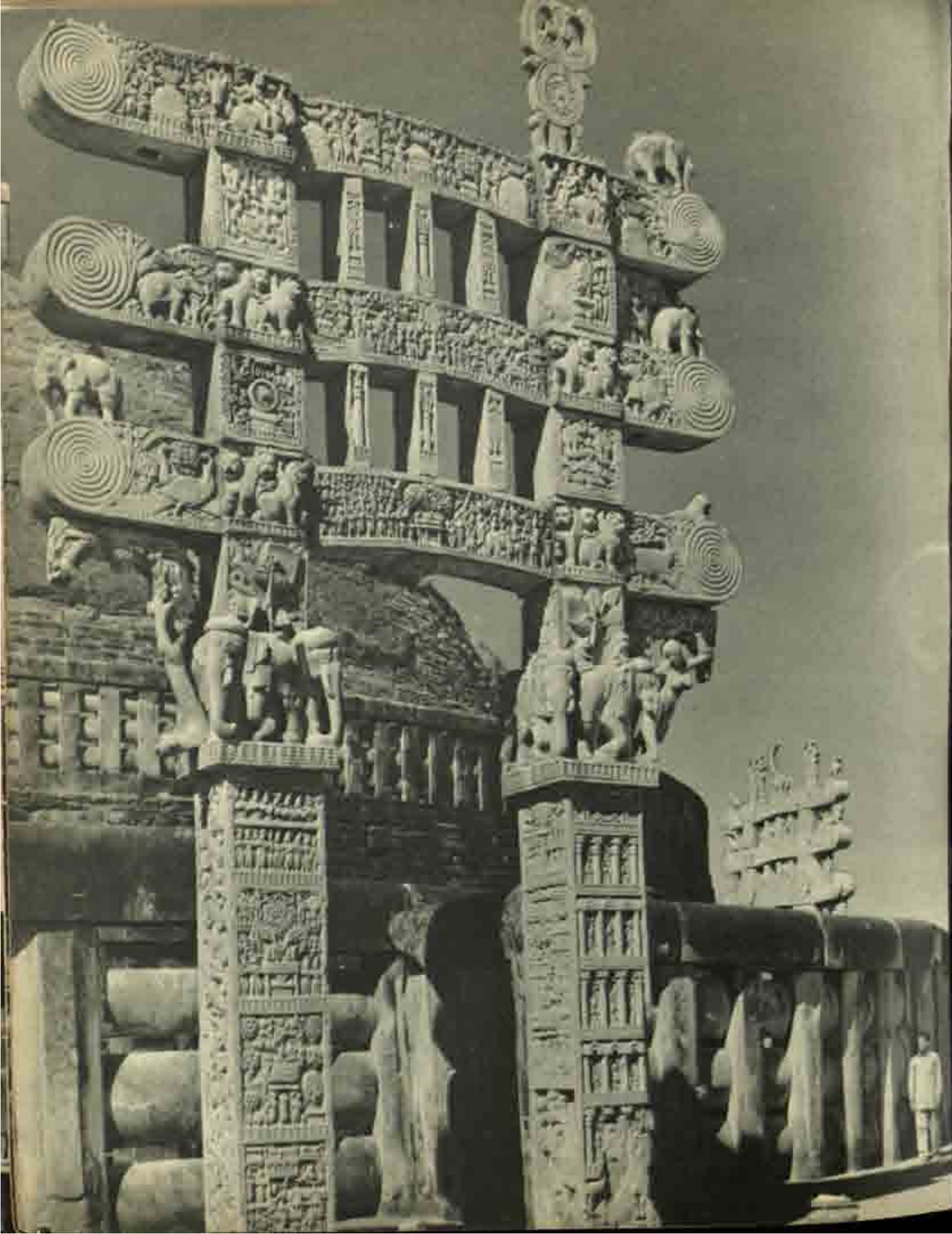
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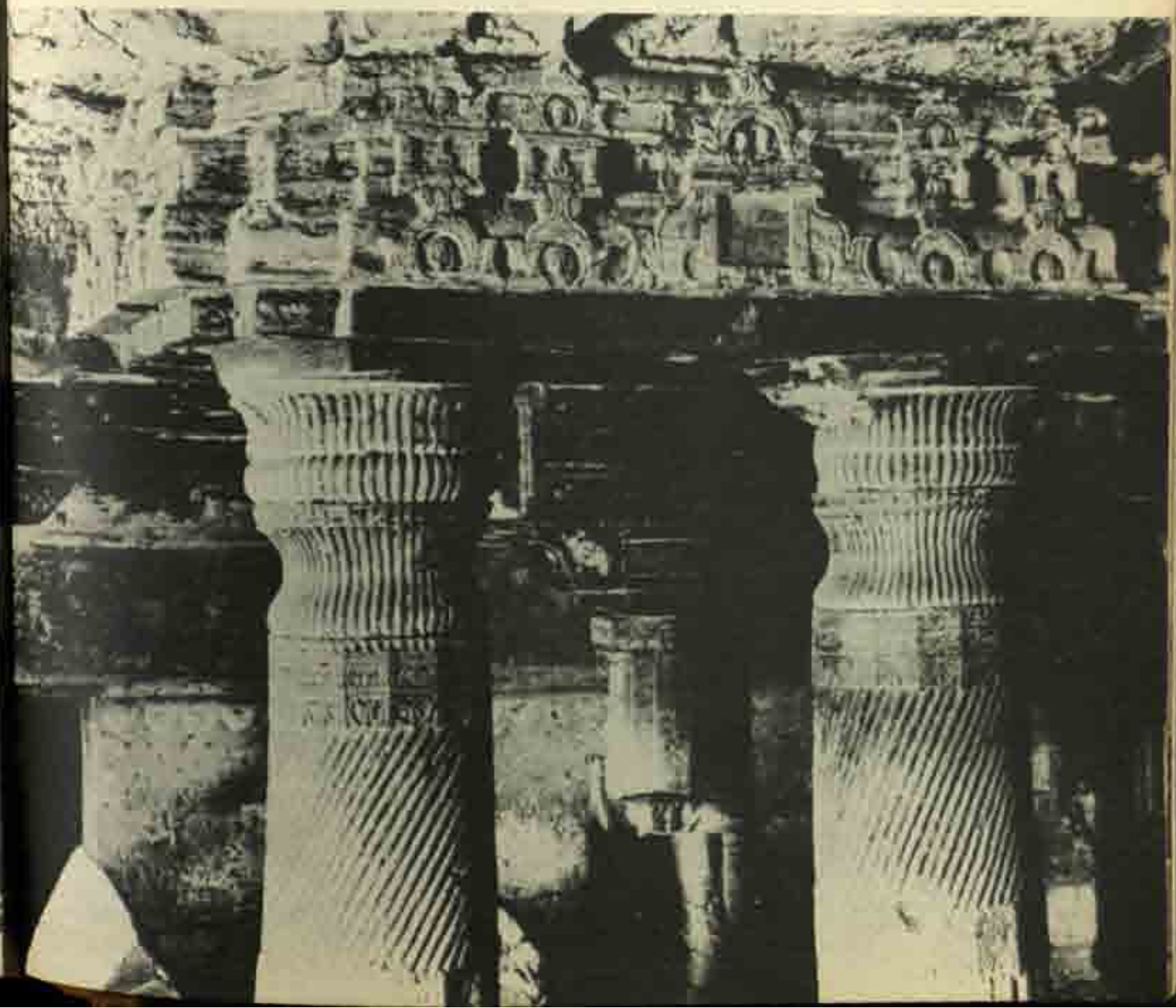


74. Bronze image of Tārā from Kurkihar  
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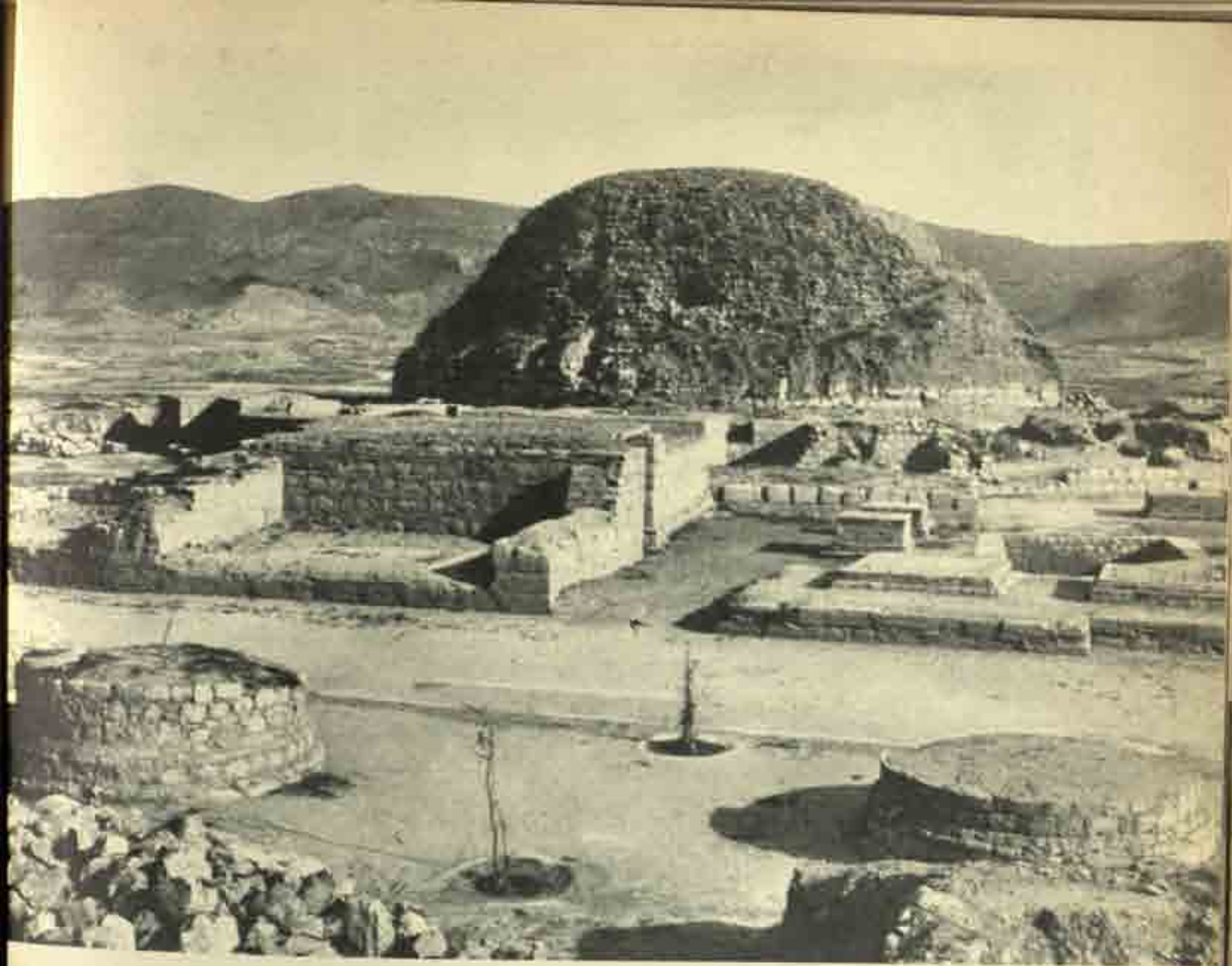




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91. *Stupa*-shaped sanctuary at Kolvi  
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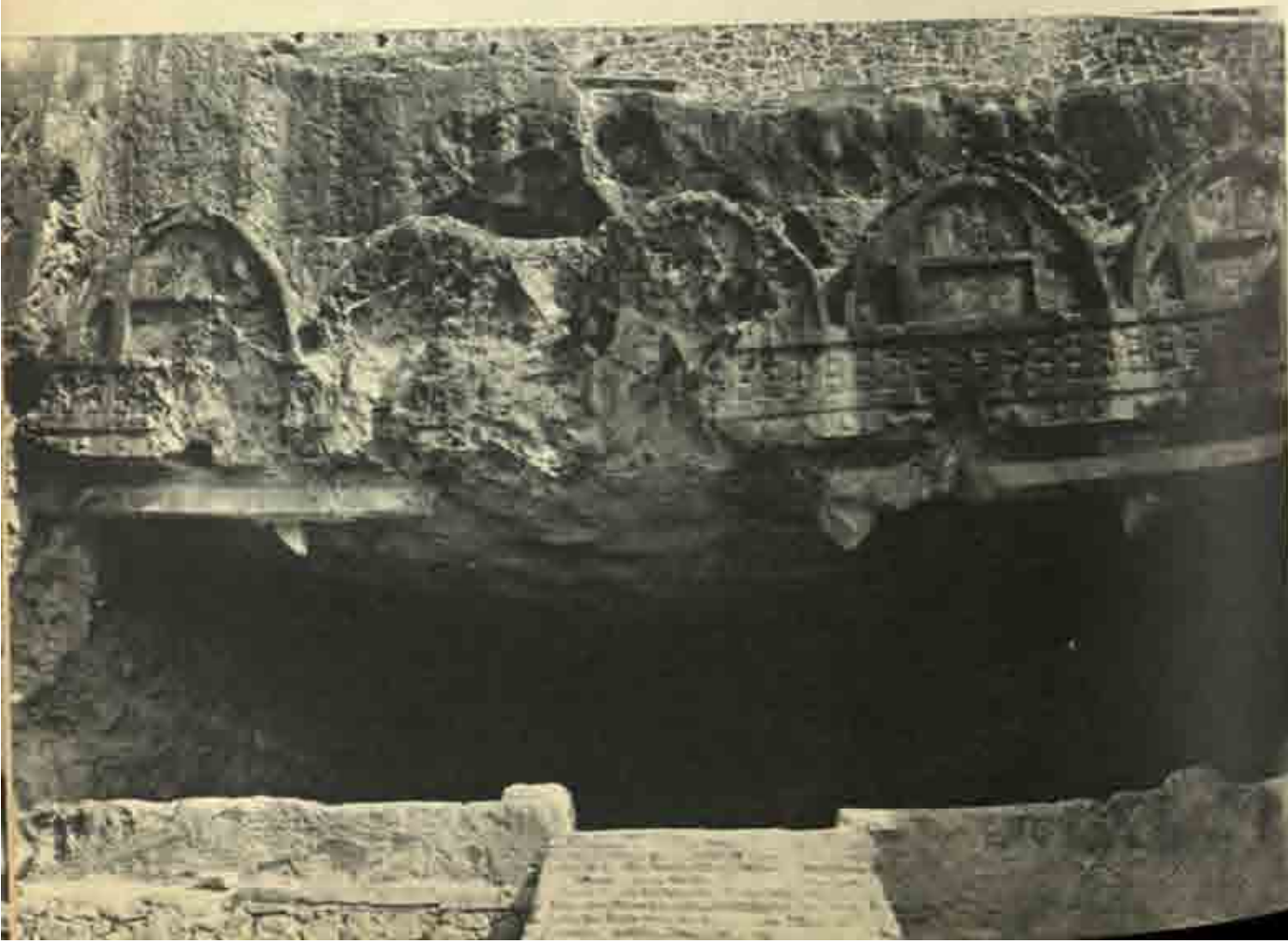
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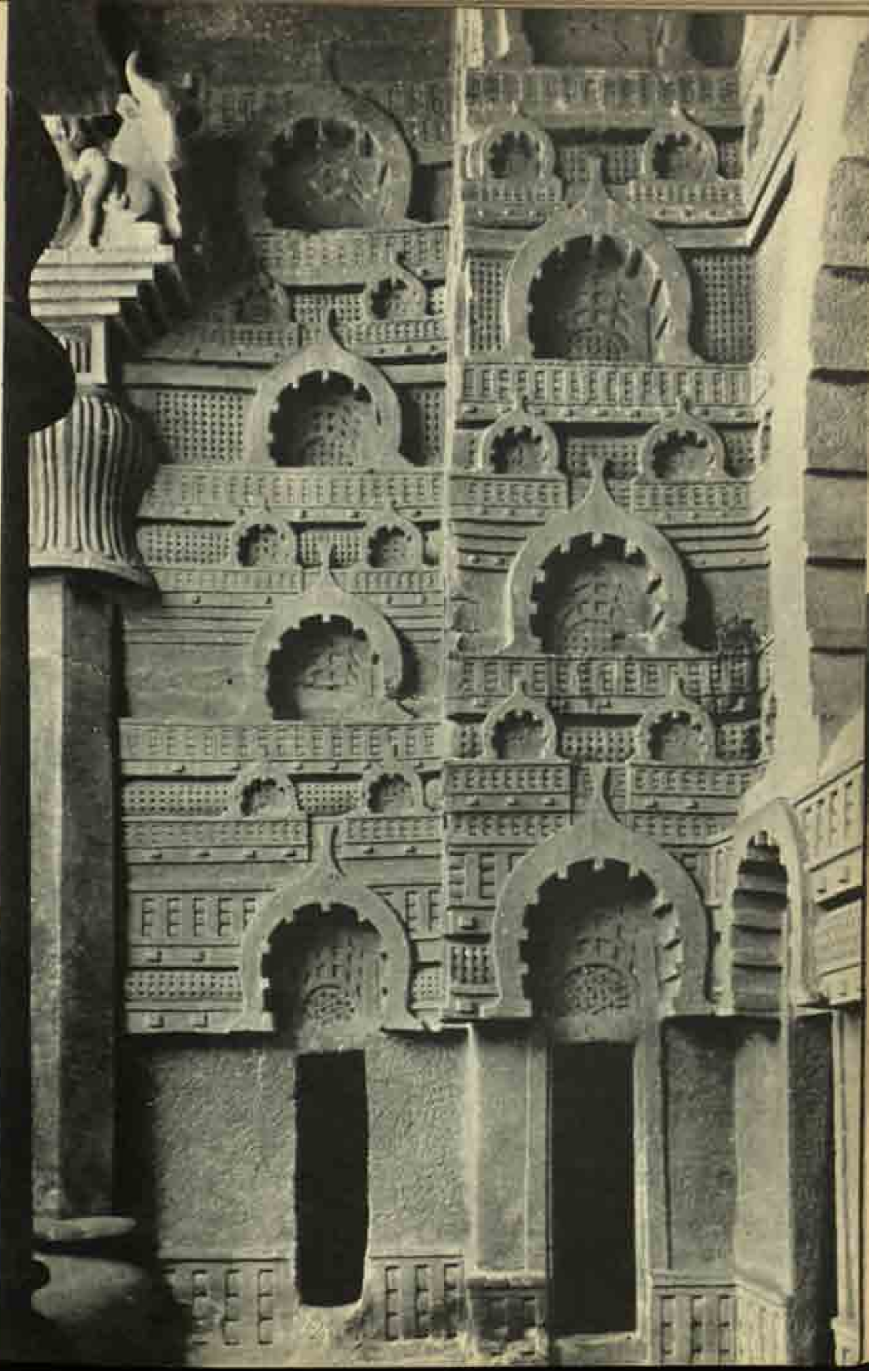


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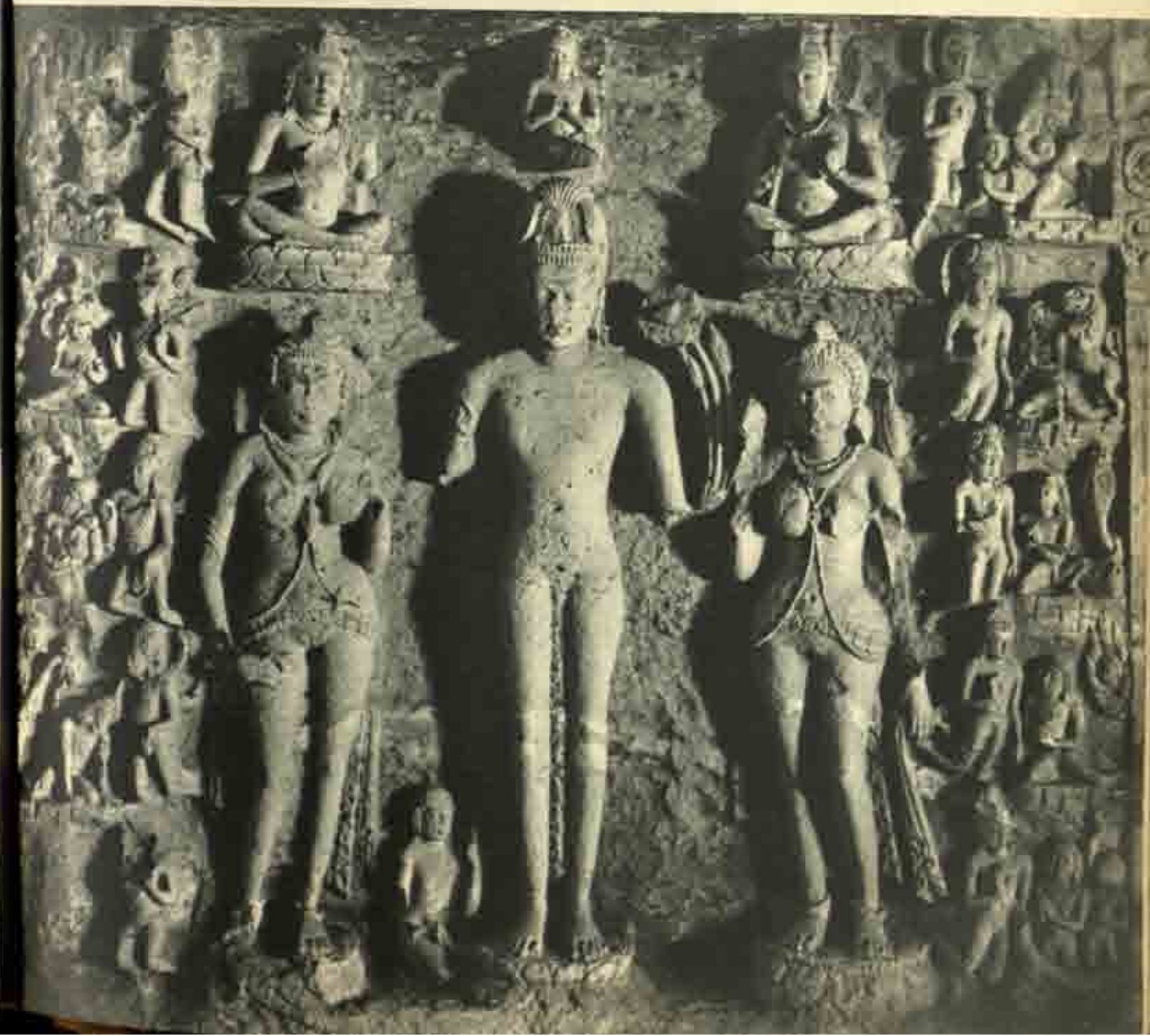






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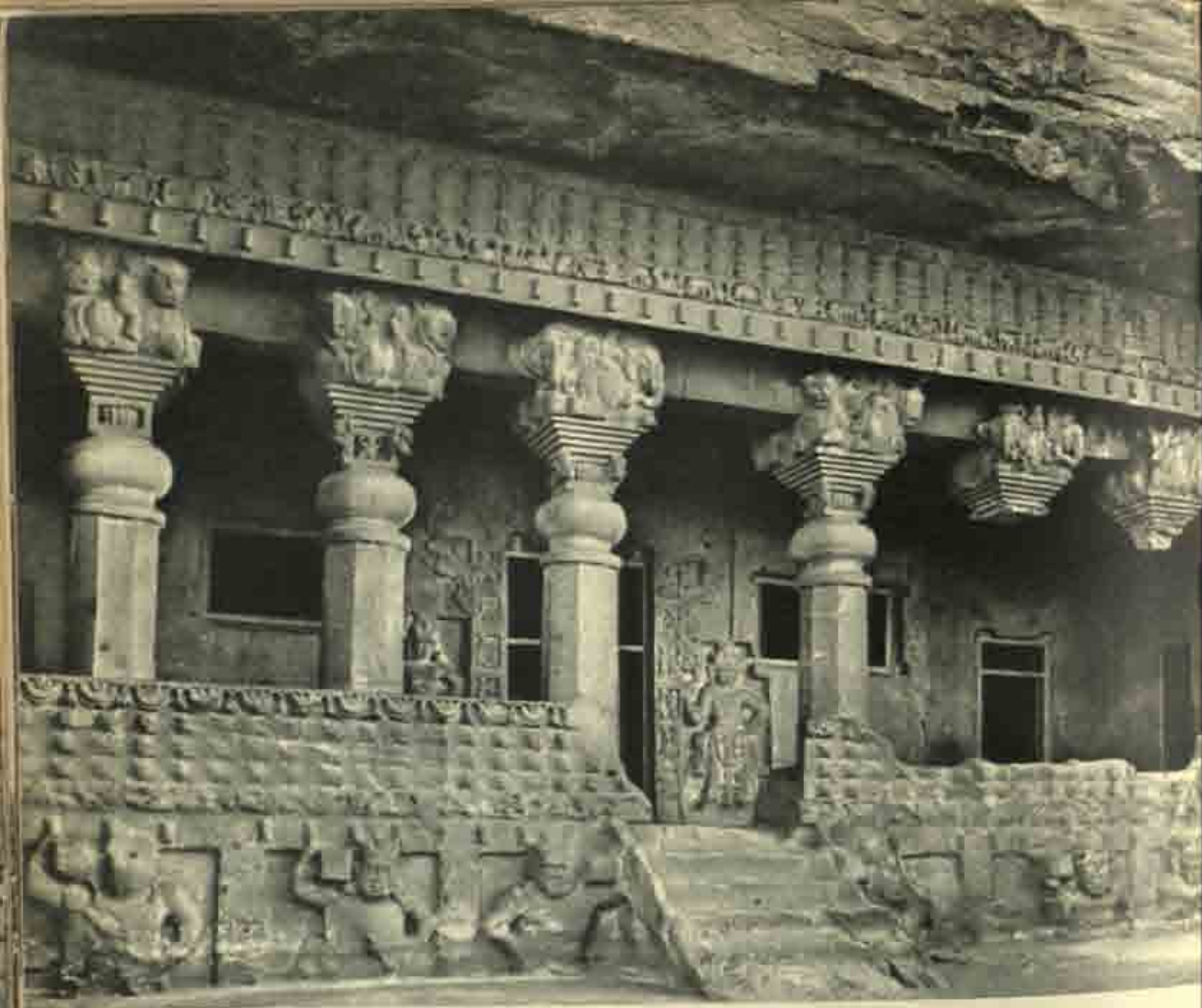


107. A couple on the façade of the hall of the *chaitya-griha* at Kanheri  
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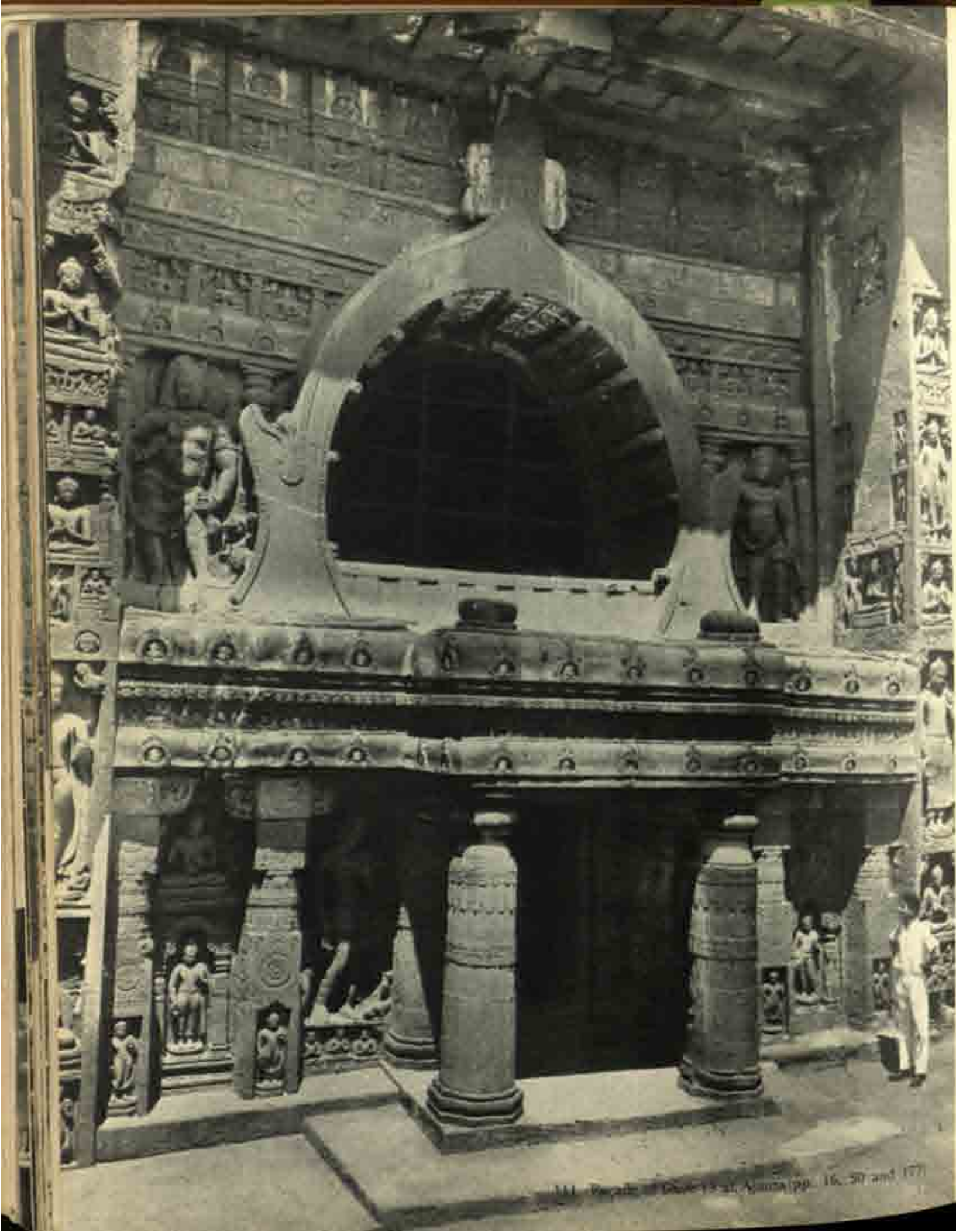


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120. Bronze image of Maitreya from Nagapattinam (p. 197)

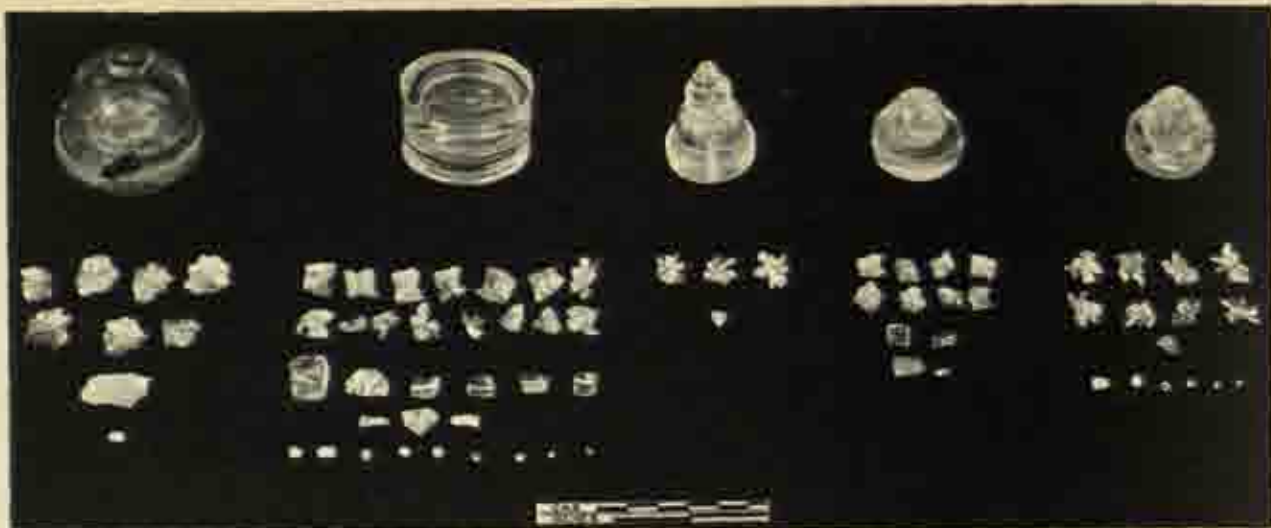


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(with some explanatory notes)

### 1. DREAM OF QUEEN MĀYĀ

on a sandstone railing-post from Bharhut (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 1 and 95.

The relief, of the second century B.C., depicts an elephant approaching the sleeping figure of Māyā from above. According to the Buddhist tradition, the Bodhisattva descended from the Tushita heaven in this form.

Inscribed label (not reproduced) above the medallion: *Bhagavato ākramati* ('the descent of the Lord').

### 2. BIRTH OF GAUTAMA AND SEVEN STEPS

on a limestone casing-slab from Nagarjunakonda (now in the National Museum, New Delhi).

Pp. 1 and 208.

On the dexter of the relief, of the third century A.D., is the bent figure of Māyā, grasping the bough of a tree, with two attendants. Gautama's presence is indicated by a parasol flanked by two *chūmaras*, all suspended in the air without any support. A lady is in a pose of adoration before a long piece of cloth held by four guardian deities of the quarters. The seven foot-prints on the cloth are supposed to mark the Seven Steps which the infant is believed to have taken immediately after birth.

### 3. GREAT DEPARTURE

on a schist slab from Lōriyan Tangaī (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 2, 14 and 116.

In the panel Gautama is seen on his horse Kaṇṭhaka riding away from the city of Kāpilavastu. The hoofs of the horse are upheld by *yakshas*, lest the noise may alarm the city-guards. Behind Kaṇṭhaka is the groom Chhandaka holding aloft an umbrella over the head of Gautama. Above him is Vajrapāṇi. Before the horse stands Māra, the Evil One, tempting Gautama to give up his mission. Behind Māra is a *deva*, above whom is possibly a follower of Māra. By the side of this person with a dagger in his right hand is the city-goddess of Kāpilavastu.

### 4. ADORATION OF HEAD-DRESS

on a railing-post from Bharhut (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 2 (foot-note 3) and 95.

The three-storeyed building on the sinister of the relief, of the second century B.C., represents Vaiṣṇavya palace (as known from the inscribed label on it, *Veṣṇavya pāsāde*) of Śakra, the king of gods. The adjoining pavilion with a domical roof is called Sudharmā, the assembly-hall of the gods. Within it is in adoration the dressed hair-lock of Gautama with the crest-jewel. On the dome of the hall are inscriptions: *Sudharmā devasabhā* and *Bhagavato chudāmaha* ('the festival of the hair-lock of the Lord').

In the forecourt, as a part of the festival, four nymphs are dancing to the tune of music,



both instrumental and vocal; the spectators are the *devas* of the Vaijayaṇṭa palace and the Sudharmā assembly-hall.

### 5. EMACIATED FIGURE OF GAUTAMA

due to extreme asceticism for six years from Sikri (now in the Central Museum, Lahore).  
Pp. 2, 14 and 116.

### 6. MĀRA'S ATTACK

on the wall of Cave 26 at Ajanta.  
Pp. 2 and 177.

On the dexter of the relief, of the Vākāṭaka period, is Māra, mounted on his elephant, with his demonic hosts threatening Gautama with various missiles and weapons in order to dislodge him from his seat under a *pīpa* tree. In the centre Gautama, challenged by Māra as regards his right to the seat, calls upon the Earth, by touching the ground with his right hand (*bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*), to bear witness to his right by virtue of his merits. On the sinister is the flight of the discomfited Māra along with his retinue.

### 7. NĀGARĀJA MUCHILINDA AT THE FOOT OF BUDDHA'S SEAT

on the western gateway of Stūpa 1 at Sanchi.  
Pp. 2 and 97.

Buddha spent the sixth week after Enlightenment in the company of the serpent-king Muchilinda who shielded him during a rain-shower by his coils and hoods.

In the present relief (first century B.C.), however, Muchilinda with a five-headed hood is seen seated below the seat of Buddha under a tree, over which is an umbrella. The full retinue of the king consists of his two queens, attendants and a troupe of a dancer and five musicians, all single-hooded *nāgis*.

### 8. PAVILION OVER BUDDHA'S PROMENADE

on the railing from Bharhut (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).  
Pp. 2 (foot-note 5) and 61.

The relief, of the second century B.C., presents a two-storeyed oblong pillared pavilion with sides open and a barrel-vaulted roof with a row of finials along the ridge. Inside is a long platform, strewn with flowers, which marks the promenade where Buddha walked to and fro during the third week after Enlightenment.

### 9. FIRST SERMON

on a sandstone slab from Sarnath (now in the Archaeological Museum, Sarnath).  
Pp. 3, 9, 15, 66 and 67.

The image, of the Gupta period, depicts Buddha setting the Wheel of the Law in motion (*dharma-chakra-pravartana*) by delivering his First Sermon to five anchorites at Mṛigadāva. The particular hand-pose is indicative of the *dharma-chakra-pravartana-mudrā*, the actual wheel being represented below the seat of Buddha. The two recumbent deer indicate the venue, Mṛigadāva (Deer-park). In the five monkish figures flanking the wheel can be recognized the first five converted monks. The kneeling female figure on the dexter possibly represents the donor of the sculpture.

### 10. VICTORY OVER A SERPENT

in the fire-temple at Uruvelā on the eastern gateway of Stūpa 1 at Sanchi.  
Pp. 4 and 97.



In order to convert the fire-worshipping Uruvelā-Kāśyapa and his two brothers and disciples, Buddha performed a number of miracles in and around Kāśyapa's hermitage at Uruvelā. One of these miracles was the subduing of a venomous serpent dwelling in the fire-temple which had to be deserted on account of this serpent. Despite Kāśyapa's warning, Buddha entered the temple and by his effulgence overawed the serpent which meekly crept into his begging-bowl.

In the panel, of the first century B.C., is seen the hermitage of Kāśyapa by the side of the Nairāñjanā which is resorted to by anchorites both for their bath and water and also animals. In front of the door of a *parṇasālā*—a circular cottage with a domical roof of leaves—is possibly Kāśyapa who is in conversation with another ascetic with matted hair (*jaṭila*). Behind the latter is a fire-altar with three sacrificial ladles. Higher up is the fire-temple with a somewhat domical roof, Buddha's presence within the snake-infested temple is indicated by a vacant throne. Flames are seen coming out of *chaitya*-windows of the roof. On the dexter of the temple is Kāśyapa with his two brothers in the attitude of warning Buddha. The same group with a fourth figure, possibly a disciple of Kāśyapa, appears on the sinister; surprised apparently by Buddha's performance, they are now in an attitude of adoration.

### 11. MIRACLE OF FLOOD

on the eastern gateway of Stūpa 1 at Sanchi.

Pp. 4 and 97.

During his stay at Uruvelā an unexpected heavy rain caused a spate in the Nairāñjanā which flooded the area. When Kāśyapa and his brothers hastened in a canoe to the rescue of Buddha, they found to their surprise Buddha walking on the surface of the raging waters as on a dry path.

The relief, of the first century B.C., shows Kāśyapa and his two companions in a canoe (in the background) and the promenade (shaped like an oblong stone) of Buddha. In the foreground, Kāśyapa, with his brothers and a disciple on a dry piece of land, is seen paying homage to Buddha who is once more symbolically represented by a vacant seat under a tree at the bottom right-hand corner of the relief. The magnitude of the flood is indicated by waves encompassing the trunks of trees.

### 12. RĀHULA ASKING FOR PATRIMONY

in Cave 17 at Ajanta.

Pp. 4, 16 and 178.

The painting, of the Vākāṭaka period, represents the touching scene in front of the palace-gate of Kapilavastu. Yaśodharā, Buddha's wife, has put forward her only son Rāhula who with his outspread hands is asking, at the instance of his mother, for his inheritance from his father. The towering figure of Buddha is seen in a pensive mood while forwarding his begging-bowl which is the only patrimony Rāhula should expect from his father in the lineage of the Buddhas.

### 13. PURCHASE OF JETAVANA AND FOUNDATION OF ANĀTHAPIṆḌIKĀRĀMA

on a railing-post from Bharhut (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 4, 75 and 95.

The sinister half of the medallion, of the second century B.C., relates to the purchase of the park of Prince Jeta with as many coins as would cover the park. Thus we find (i) a bullock-cart with coins and the unyoked bullocks resting on the ground; (ii) a person unloading coins, (iii) another carrying the coins and (iv) two persons engaged in spreading the



coins on the surface of the park of Prince Jeta. On the dexter are represented the nuclear structures of the Anāthapiṇḍikārāma: one, labelled as Gaṇḍha-kuṭi, having an oblong plan and a gabled or barrel-vaulted roof and the other, called Kosamba-kuṭi, being a circular cottage with a domical roof crowned by a finial. The central figure with a spouted water-pot in hand represents Anāthapiṇḍika dedicating, in the customary way, the gift by pouring waters over the hands of Buddha. Buddha's presence is indicated by a vacant seat below a mango-tree near Kosamba-kuṭi. The princely figure with folded hands behind Kosamba-kuṭi, presumably, represents Prince Jeta who is perhaps represented also in the scene of the purchase in the standing figure near the bullocks.

Inscribed label below the medallion: *Jetavana Anāthapeḍḍiko deti koṭi-samthalena ketā* ('Anāthapiṇḍika dedicates Jetavana, purchased with a layer of crores').

#### 14. MIRACLE OF ŚRĀVASTĪ

on a sandstone slab from Sarnath (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).  
Pp. 5, 9, 15, 67 and 76.

In order to prove his superiority over the six heretical teachers, Buddha accepted their challenge for exhibition of his supernatural powers and performed a few miracles in the *prātihārya-maṇḍapa* of Śrāvastī. One of these miracles was the creation of a huge array of representations of himself.

The sculpture, of the Gupta period, presents fourteen figures of Buddha, in all the five *mudrās*—*dharma-chakra-pravartana*, *dhyāna*, *abhaya*, *vāra* and *bhūmi-sparśa*—, both standing and seated on lotuses issuing from different shoots of a common stem.

#### 15. MIRACLE OF VAIŚĀLĪ

on the northern gateway of Stūpa I at Sanchi.  
Pp. 5, 9, 73 and 97.

The relief, of the first century B.C., depicts a monkey approaching Buddha (represented by a seat below a *pīṭha* tree) with a begging-bowl which has been filled up with honey. There is a second monkey behind. Two men, four women and a child possibly represent the crowd which witnessed this miraculous spectacle.

#### 16. MIRACLE OF SĀṆKĀŚYA

on the northern gateway of Stūpa I at Sanchi.  
Pp. 5, 9, and 97.

The relief, of the first century B.C., depicts Buddha's descent (*Devavatāra*) from the Trayastriṃśa heaven to earth at Sāṅkāśya. The top part of the panel depicts the heaven with gods seated by the side of Buddha represented by a seat below a tree at the head of the ladder.

The ladder flanked by rows of *devas* signifies Buddha's descent. At the foot of the ladder is a seat again below a tree, suggesting Buddha's landing on the soil of Sāṅkāśya where devotees are paying homage to him.

#### 17. MIRACLE OF RĀJAGRĪHA

from Amaravati (now in the Government Museum, Madras).  
Pp. 6, 9, 14, 71 and 204.

The limestone relief, of the second century A.D., is on a cross-bar of a railing.

The venue of the scene is a street of Rājagṛha, near the city-gate. Nāḷagiri, which has been maddened and let loose at the instance of Devadatta, the jealous cousin of Buddha, in



order to kill Buddha, is shown twice, once in its furious mood running wild on the street and causing a great panic amidst the pedestrians and the second time submissively kneeling before the compassionate Buddha. The calm serenity of Buddha and the monk disciples behind him has been delineated in effective contrast to the panic-stricken crowd on the street. Above, people are watching the scene from the balcony of houses bordering the street.

#### 18. GANG OF ASSASSINS IN FRONT OF BUDDHA

from Jamalgarhi (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 6, 14, 71 and 116.

Devadatta hired a gang of brigands to murder Buddha. But when the hirelings saw him, they were so much overawed by his personality that they fell at his feet, confessed their guilty intention and became converts.

On the dexter is seen the group of the hirelings (their physical strength emphasized by muscles). One of the gang bows down at the feet of Buddha who is offering assurance. Behind Buddha is a monk, while on the sinister is Vajrapāṇi who is almost a constant companion of Buddha in Gandhāra reliefs.

#### 19. GREAT DECEASE

from the Gandhāra region (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 6, 9, 14 and 116.

Buddha is seen lying on his right side with one leg resting over the other on a couch spread between two *śāla* trees (Only one tree exists on the slab; the other was presumably carved on another slab which depicted the continuation of the scene.). Below his head, partly supported by his right hand, is a pillow. The grief-stricken figures behind Buddha represent the Mallas, while the figure amidst the leaves of the *śāla* tree is perhaps a sylvan deity. Below the tree are two monks. The one near the feet of Buddha and holding a long staff is probably Mahākāśyapa who arrived at Kuśinagara after the decease but before the cremation (In fact, the funeral pile could not be set on fire till he arrived and bowed down at the feet of Buddha.). The nude figure behind him is generally taken as an Ājīvika ascetic from whom Mahākāśyapa got the news of Buddha's decease. Below the couch is Vajrapāṇi who fell into a swoon. The seated figure, deeply absorbed in meditation near Vajrapāṇi, may represent Subhadra, the last convert who attained *nirvāṇa* shortly afterwards.

A portion of the composition was most probably carved on a separate slab which presumably contained the figures of monks including Ānanda and the *śāla* tree on the dexter.

#### 20. EIGHT GREAT MIRACLES

from Nālandā (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 9 and 89.

The sculpture, of the Pāla period, represents the *aṣṭa-mahā-pratihāryas*.

The central theme represents the Enlightenment at Bodhi-Gaya. Seated under the *Bodhi* tree, Buddha is in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*, this hand-pose being symbolical of his Enlightenment.

The treatment of the seven other incidents is condensed. Starting from the bottom left corner and proceeding clockwise, we find:

- (i) the Birth (Gautama is seen coming out of the right side of the body of Māyā holding the branch of a tree.);
- (ii) the Descent at Sāṅkāśya (Buddha is seen standing below an umbrella held by a *deva*.);



- (iii) the Miracle of Śrāvastī (Buddha is in *dharma-chakra-pravartana-mudrā*. The tiny figure near the seat perhaps represents a heretical teacher.);
- (iv) the Great Decease (Of the two figures, one, near the feet of Buddha, possibly represents Mahākāśyapa and the other, near the head, Ānanda.);
- (v) the First Sermon at Mṛgadāvā (The two deer flanking the wheel indicates the venue.);
- (vi) the Subjugation of Nālagiri (suggested not only by the attitude of Buddha's right hand but by the figure of an elephant bowing down near the feet of Buddha); and
- (vii) the Presentation of honey (Buddha holds a bowl in his hands, while the monkey, possibly with a bowl in hand, is seen below the seat of Buddha.).

Below the lotus-seat of the central figure in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā* are three more figures of Buddha, all seated in *vajra-paryāṅkāsaṇa*. They display three *mudrās* not found in the eight scenes—*vara*, *dhyāna* and *abhaya*. Possibly these figures were introduced to complete all the five *mudrās* characteristic of Buddha. The three-hooded snake over the central figure of these three possibly represents Muchilinda.

## 21. AŚOKA'S PILLAR AT LAURIYA-NANDANGARH

Pp. 10 and 84.

With its elegant and balanced proportions, smooth and plain shaft and exquisitely-modelled crowning elements, the pillar of the Chunar sandstone is one of the finest surviving pillars of Aśoka. The tall tapering shaft is a monolith with lustrous polish. At its crown is a bell-shaped member with bold lotus-petals, below which are two thin mouldings—the lower of rope-design and the upper of bead-and-reel. Over the bell-shaped lotus is a necking of cable-pattern. Perched above the necking is the capital, a separate stone, consisting of a life-sized seajant figure of lion resting on a circular abacus relieved with a procession of geese.

The pillar bears the first six Pillar-Edicts of Aśoka, who presumably built a *stūpa* near by.

## 22. CASING-SLAB OF THE MAHĀCHAITYA FROM AMARAVATI

(now in the Government Museum, Madras).

Pp. 11 and 203.

The limestone slab, which was one of the many veneer-slabs of the drum of the Mahā-chaitya, presents an idea of the *stūpa* as renovated and embellished in the second-third century A.D.

Copyright: Government Museum, Madras.

## 23. IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM AHICHCHHATRĀ

(now in the National Museum, New Delhi).

P. 13.

A product of the Mathura School of the period of the Kushān king Huvishka, the sculpture is of spotted red sandstone. The central figure is of Buddha seated cross-legged on a pedestal supported by lions with right hand in *abhaya-mudrā*. The mass of hair is gathered on the crown in the shape of a snail-shell (*kaparda*). Modelling indicates physical strength. The circular halo, against the background of the branches of the Bodhi tree, is plain except for the scalloped border. Buddha is flanked by Padmapāñi (on the sinister) and Vajrapāñi, the wreath and garments of the latter presenting alien features.

On the pedestal is a dedicatory inscription.



**24. IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM MATHURA**

(displayed in the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi).

P. 13.

This image, of the Gupta period, and the one illustrated on photo 23 clearly bring out the difference in the artistic visions and attainments of the Mathura artists of two different epochs. The physical strength of the figure of the early School has given place to inner strength reflected in disciplined luminous body seen through the transparent drapery. The soft serene face evinces full absorption and spiritual glow. The hair is arranged in innumerable spiral locks which also appear on the gathered-up hair on the crown of the head.

**25. IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM ALLURU**

(now in the Victoria Jubilee Museum, Vijayawada).

Pp. 14 and 213.

Assignable to the period between the images of photos 23 and 24, this limestone image gives an idea of the conception of the image of Buddha by the artists of the lower Krishna valley. Rigorous discipline is reflected not only in the tough body but in the tight-lipped hard face with wide-open eyes.

**26. IMAGE OF BUDDHA**

(formerly in Guides' Mess, Mardan).

P. 14.

Belonging to the mature phase of the Gandhāra art, this image is remarkable for its graceful head and placid expression. The body is firmly modelled. The right hand is in *abhaya-mudrā*. Around the head is a circular halo.

The hair above the forehead is carefully arranged in parallel rows of wavy locks, while there are spiral locks, also undulating like waves, covering the low bun-shaped *ushnisha*.

**27. IMAGE OF BUDDHA AT RATNAGIRI**

Pp. 17, 230 and 232.

Made of chlorite, the sculpture depicts Buddha in *vyākhyāna-mudrā* with Bodhisattvas by his sides. Of fine workmanship, the image appears to have been a product of about the twelfth century A.D.

**28. IMAGE OF AN EIGHTEEN-ARMED GODDESS FROM NĀLANDĀ**

(now in the National Museum, New Delhi).

Pp. 17 and 89.

Bernet Kempers identifies this bronze image as Prajñāpāramitā, while J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw designates it as Chundā.

Seated in *vajra-paryāṅkāsa* on a lotus the stem of which is supported by two three-hooded *nāgas*, the goddess exhibits with her two principal hands *vyākhyāna-mudrā*. Of the attributes in her remaining right hands, rosary, *vajra*, handle (of an weapon?), handle (of an weapon?), sword, *ratna-dāma* (?), fruit and *abhaya-mudrā* are identified. The objects in the remaining left hands are book, pot, *śankha*, *chakra*, *dhvajā*, noose, flask (?) and stalk of a flower.

The watery region from which the lotus-seat of the goddess emerges is emphasized not only by the two *nāgas* who hold the stem but by a *makara*, a fish, a tortoise, a lotus-bud, a lotus and two lotus-leaves provided in front of the *nāgas* and the stem.

According to the Buddhist tradition, the *Prajñāpāramitā* scripture (the goddess being its



personification), which Buddha is believed to have entrusted to the care of the *nāgas* in the nether region, was brought back to the world by Nāgārjuna.

On the pedestal is a dedicatory inscription, in characters of about the ninth century A.D., of a *paramopāsaka*, presumably represented in the kneeling figure on the dexter of the footed seat.

### 29. IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM KURKIHAR

(now in the Patna Museum, Patna).

Pp. 17 and 90.

This bronze image, of about the ninth-tenth century A.D., possibly represents Buddha's descent from the Trayastrimśa heaven at Sāṅkāśya in the company of Brahmā and Śakra. Standing in *sama-pāda* on a *viśva-padma*, Buddha displays *vara-mudrā* with his right hand, the left holding the hem of the *saṅghāṭi* with schematic folds. The *ushnisha* is in the form of a flame. The white of the eyes and *śrṅgā* are inlaid with silver.

Near the right foot of Buddha is Brahmā with a *chāmara* in his right hand and a *kamapṇala* (water-pot) in his left. The figure, on the left of Buddha, is possibly of Śakra, who instead of holding his characteristic attribute, carries a bowl (begging-bowl of Buddha ?) with his hands.

### 30. IMAGE OF VAJRA-TĀRĀ FROM PATHARGHATA

(bronze, now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

P. 17.

The main deity is seated on the pericarp of a lotus, the eight petals of which can be opened and closed at will. There are eight goddesses, each against a petal, forming a *maṇḍala* round Vajra-Tārā.

### 31. IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM NAGAPATTINAM

(now in the Government Museum, Madras).

Pp. 17 and 197.

Of the late Chola period, the bronze image depicts Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*. The *ushnisha* is in the form of a flame. There are two *nāga chāmara*-bearers above the back-rest of Buddha. The member with foliated leaves and scrolls above the *chhatra* is an unusual feature.

### 32. IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM BIHAR

(now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 9 and 18.

The sculpture, of the late Pāla period (about the eleventh century A.D.), depicts Buddha in splendour immediately before Enlightenment when he calls upon the Earth to bear witness to his right to the *vajrāsana* (There is a relief of a *vajra* on the seat.). The resplendent figure is bejewelled in a highly-embellished *mukuta*, a broad necklace and *kundalas*. In early period Buddha is never made to wear ornaments after his farewell to Chhandaka.

The four other figures of Buddha on the back-slab are also bejewelled and are connected with four of the eight great incidents of Buddha's life.

### 33. IMAGE OF SAMBARA FROM RATNAGIRI

(now in the Patna Museum, Patna).

Pp. 17 and 232.

The khondalite image, with three heads visible, tramples in *ālīdha*-pose upon the Brahmanical deities Bhairava and Kālārātri. The two principal hands are crossed against the



chest in the *vajra-hukhāra-mudrā*, the right hand holding a *vajra* and the left a *ghaṇṭā*. With the two uppermost hands, the fierce-looking deity holds, above the head, the hide of an elephant. The remaining four right hands carry a *damru*, a *trishūla*, a *kartri* and a *paraśu*, while the corresponding left hands have a *vajra-pāśa*, the head of Brahmā, a *kapāla* and a *khaṭvāṅga*.

### 34. CRYSTAL CASKET FROM PIPRAHWA

(now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 21 and 79.

This exquisitely-polished crystal casket ( $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. in maximum diameter and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. high together with its cover) and the following one (photo 35) were found within a stone coffer deposited inside the Great Stūpa of Piprahiwa. The handle of the cover of the casket is in the form of a fish stuffed with several tiny beads in paste and seven gold bands having gold granulated six-petalled flowers and gold circular frames attached to them.

### 35. INSCRIBED STEATITE CASKET FROM PIPRAHWA

(now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 21, 24, 79 and 80.

On the lid of this steatite vase (6 in. high and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. in maximum diameter) is the following record inscribed in characters of about the third century B.C.

*sukīti-bhātinath sa-bhagīnikanān sa-puta-dalanān iyaṁ salīla-nidhane Budhasa bhagavate sakiyanān.*

### 36. MINIATURE STŪPA FROM LORIYAN TANGAI

(now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 28, 30, 117 and 118.

The partially-restored stūpa (4' 9" high) furnishes a fairly good idea about the stūpas of Gandhāra. It consists of a square platform, a circular drum in three gradually-diminishing tiers, a hemispherical dome flattened at the top, a squarish *harmikā* with gradually-expanding corbels and a *chhatravali* with a series of gradually-diminishing *chhatras*.

The façades of the platform simulate the lowest storey of a multi-storeyed structure. Thus, the Indo-Corinthian pilasters, resting on the moulded basement, support architraves, over which are ends of beams, the latter holding the flat terrace. The spaces between the pilasters are luxuriantly carved with panels, each representing a scene from the life of Buddha, e.g. the dream of Māyā, the interpretation of the dream, the birth of Gautama, the bathing of the new-born child, the mother and child brought in a palanquin to Kapilavastu, Asita's prediction of the future greatness of the child, Gautama leaving Kapilavastu and Gautama's dismounting and taking leave of Chhandaka.

The recessed part of the lowest tier of the drum is relieved with seated figures of Buddha, separated from one another by trees. The corresponding part of the second tier has a row of dwarfish male figures standing between trees. The recessed part of the topmost tier has a trellis-work.

While the lower part of the dome presents a series of squares, each divided into four triangles, the upper is relieved with lotus-petals.

In a part of the topmost tier of the drum and dome has been provided the façade of a barrel-vaulted apāḍal shrine with an image of Buddha. The vault rises above the height of the dome.

### 37. STŪPA I AT SANCHI

Pp. 11, 24-26 and 97.



**38. STŪPA AT GIRIYAK**

Pp. 28, 30 and 73.

This brick *stūpa* presents a tower-like appearance with a high drum and a low dome.

**39. RAILING AND GATEWAY OF THE MAIN STŪPA OF BHARHUT**

as installed in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

Pp. 11, 26 and 93-96.

**40. MINIATURE STŪPA AT BODH-GAYA**

Pp. 30 and 63.

The elaborately-moulded platform of this miniature *stūpa*, of about the eleventh-twelfth century A.D., is almost equal in height to the combined drum and dome. The central projections on the four faces of the platform make its plan *tri-ratha*. The four faces of the heavily-moulded drum contain niches with images within. The low dome is a truncated cylinder. The *harmikā* simulates the form of a *chhajjā*. The *chhatrāvālī* has been stylized into a series of gradually-diminishing discs in the form of an elongated cone.

**41. STŪPA INSIDE THE CORE OF THE COLOSSAL TERRACED STŪPA**

(photo 48) at Lauriya-Nandangarh.

Pp. 30 and 85.

Possibly of the Gupta period, this *stūpa* presents a polygonal platform, a drum with mouldings at the base and top, a hemispherical dome flattened at the top and a gradually-expanding *harmikā*.

**42. MINIATURE STŪPA FROM NAGAPATTINAM**

(now in the Government Museum, Madras).

Pp. 17, 30 and 197.

Of the late Chōla period, this bronze miniature displays a form with a limited distribution. The lower part is in the form of a sanctuary with a revolving door on one side and figures of Buddha and Bodhisattva in the central part (between pilasters) of the remaining three sides.

At the four corners of the roof of the sanctuary is a miniature *stūpa*.

The drum of the main *stūpa* above the basement is very low and is relieved with a *nīśa-padma*. The bulbous dome is marked with four wheels, facing the directions. The highly-stylized *chhatrāvālī* above the *harmikā* is a cone of gradually-diminishing discs, placed one above the other. The lowest disc is relieved with lotus-petals.

Copyright: Government Museum, Madras.

**43. MINIATURE STŪPA FROM KURKIHAR**

(now in the Patna Museum, Patna).

Pp. 30 and 90.

In this bronze *stūpa* we find staircases giving access to the terrace over the three-tiered platform which is *tri-ratha* on plan, pillars at the corners of the terrace, a cylindrical drum with mouldings at the base and top, a bulging hemispherical dome, a *harmikā* with corbels at the top and a dominating *chhatrāvālī* with a series of gradually-diminishing discs crowned by the shaft of a missing parasol.



**44. STŪPA-SHAPED RELIQUARY FROM JAULIAN**

(now in the Archaeological Museum, Taxila).

Pp. 30, 126 and 127.

Made of lime-plaster, this reliquary, of about the fifth century A.D., simulates the form of a *stūpa* with a high three-tiered platform, a terraced drum, an inconspicuous dome, a plain *harmikā* and a highly-stylized spire-like *chhatrāvālī*.

**45. CAVE 12 AT AJANTA**

Pp. 12, 33 and 175.

In this monastery, the cells are arranged on three sides of an astylar hall. Above the level of door-openings is a series of *chaitya*-arches, connected by railings.

**46. APSIDAL ROCK-CUT MONASTERY AT BEDSA**

Pp. 12, 33, 34 (fig. 5) and 154.

The plan of this cave is rather unusual for a monastery. The cells are arrayed around the astylar hall, which is apsidal on plan and with a vaulted ceiling. Over the oblong door-openings are horseshoe-shaped *chaitya*-arches, connected with one another by railings perched on beams. Within the arches are screens in imitation of woodwork. Some of the cells present blind grated windows.

**47. REMAINS OF A COMPLETE UNIT**

with a *stūpa*, two apsidal sanctuaries, a three-winged monastery and a *mandapa* (Site no. 6 of T. N. Ramachandran) at Nagarjunakonda.

Pp. 29 (fig. 3), 41 and 207.

The monastery here presents three wings, the fourth side being occupied by two apsidal sanctuaries, one with a *stūpa* and the other with an image of Buddha. The cells are arranged around a verandah facing the three sides of a pillared hall (reduced to a plinth with broken pillars visible).

Beyond the apsidal sanctuaries and outside the peripheral wall stands the *stūpa* with a drum having four projections (*āyakar*) facing the cardinal directions and a dome with the framework of its core in the form of an eight-spoked wheel with a squarish hub.

**48. THE COLOSSAL TERRACED STŪPA AT LAURIYA-NANDANGARH**

Pp. 30 and 85.

**49. MONASTERIES I, 1A AND 1B AT NĀLANDĀ**

Pp. 40, 41 and 87.

These brick monasteries are quadrangular (*chatur-sālā*) on plan. They consist of a central courtyard around which runs a verandah, the ceiling of which was supported by pillars (bases of the missing pillars are visible on the kerb) resting on a raised kerb. At the back of the verandah are arrayed the cells. Guarded by two flanking pylons, the front porch leads to a rear porch. The central cell of the back side, which faces the porches and the back wall of which projects beyond the alignment of the flanking cells, was originally used as a chapel.

**50. ROCK-CUT CHAITYA-GRIHA AT KARLA**

Pp. 12, 48, 49, 155 and 156.



**51. ROCK-CUT CHAITYA-GRIHA AT BHAJA**

Pp. 12, 47, 48, 151 and 152.

**52. ROCK-CUT CIRCULAR CHAITYA-GRIHA AT JUNNAR**

Pp. 42, 44 (fig. 13) and 157.

**53. ROCK-CUT CHAITYA-GRIHA AT ELLORA**

Pp. 16, 50, 51 (fig. 17), 184 and 185.

**54. MAHĀBODHI TEMPLE AT BODH-GAYA**

Pp. 15, 53, 54, 61 and 62.

**55. BRONZE MINIATURE OF THE MAHĀBODHI TEMPLE FROM JHEWARI**

(now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

P. 54.

**56. TEMPLE 17 AT SANCHI**

Pp. 15, 52, 53 and 98.

**57. MAHĀKĀLA TEMPLE AT RATNAGIRI**

Pp. 55, 56 and 226.

**58. TEMPLE 45 AT SANCHI**

Pp. 55 and 99.

**59. HIUEN TSANG, AS PAINTED IN A CHINESE MONASTERY**

Pp. 8, 16 and 58.

Thanks to the invaluable record of Hiuen Tsang we get a picture of the Buddhist establishments that existed in the first half of the seventh century A.D. Many of the sites, otherwise forgotten, have been reclaimed with the help of the directions and distances furnished by this eminent Chinese pilgrim.

Hiuen Tsang came to India in A.D. 630 and left for China after a span of fourteen years. He not only studied intensively Buddhist literature in important institutions like Nālandā but travelled extensively throughout the contemporary India.

**60. AŚOKA'S PILLAR AT LUMBINĪ**

Pp. 9, 58 and 59.

Fashioned out of the Chunar sandstone and treated with a high polish, the tapering circular pillar is now bereft of its crowning members. The capping stone is a modern addition to keep intact the pillar which has a vertical fissure from the top down to the middle. The height of the polished portion of the extant pillar is 24 ft. 3 in., out of which a part (7 ft. high) is buried below the ground. The exact height of the hammer-dressed circular portion below the polished part has not been ascertained.

**61. INSCRIPTION ON AŚOKA'S PILLAR AT LUMBINĪ**

Pp. 10 and 59.

Written in the Brāhmī script of the third century B.C., the inscription reads as follows:



*devāna(m)piyena piyadasina lājina visativasābhicitena atana āgācha mahiyite hida Budhe tāte Sakyamunīti silāvigadabhihātā kālāpita silāthabhe cha usapāpita hida Bhagavaṃ jāteti Lummīni-gāme ubalike kaṭe aṭṭhabhāgiye cha.*

'King Priyadarśi, Beloved of the Gods, twenty years after his coronation, came in person and paid his homage to this place, because Buddha, the Sage of the Śākya, was born here. He caused a stone wall to be built around the place and also raised a stone pillar. Because the Divine One was born here, he made the village of Lummīni free of taxes and subject to pay only one-eighth of the produce.'

## 62. BIRTH OF GAUTAMA AT LUMBINI

Pp. 1, 9 and 59.

The sculpture is now fixed to the back wall of a modern shrine erected over the ruined top of an ancient temple—the main sanctuary of the site. It was extracted from the earlier sanctuary, in which it had been installed as the chief object of worship.

## 63. BRONZE FIGURES AT LUMBINI

P. 60.

Possibly found during the excavation of 1933-34, these early bronzes are now in the custody of the monk of the Lumbini Dharmodaya Committee. Both are solid with their back side concave.

The smaller (3½ in. high) of the two figures presumably stands for a devotee with folded hands.

The other figure (4½ in. high) apparently represents a Bodhisattva. Curiously enough, it bears the attributes of both Padmapāṇi and Vajrapāṇi. Thus, in its right hand is the stalk of a fully-blossomed lotus, while in its left hand is a *vajra*. This may be due to its early date when the Buddhist iconography has not yet crystallized in its rigid form.

## 64. RAILING AT BODH-GAYA

Pp. 11 and 61.

Only the posts of the railing which encircled the Mahābodhi temple in the Gupta period are visible in this photograph. As noted on p. 61, while some posts are of the first century B.C., others are of the Gupta period.

These posts have recently been shifted to the Archaeological Museum at Bodh-Gaya. The ones now visible at the site are their copies.

## 65. CAPITAL OF AŚOKA'S PILLAR AT SARNATH

(now in the Archaeological Museum, Sarnath).

Pp. 10 and 66.

## 66. DHĀMEKH STŪPA AT SARNATH

Pp. 16 and 68.

Of the cylindrical type, the *stūpa* is now bereft of the upper part. The facing of the dome and the upper mouldings of the drum are also missing. The high drum with base-mouldings and eight niches, which presumably contained images, is distinguished for decorative patterns and scroll-work of consummate workmanship.

## 67. NIRVĀṆA-CHAITYA (AS RESTORED IN 1927) AND NIRVĀṆA-SHRINE

(as rebuilt in 1956) at Kuśinagara

P. 70.



At the time of the restoration the *nirvāṇa-stūpa* was reduced to the lower part of the core. Consequently, its original outward form could not be reproduced.

The present *nirvāṇa*-shrine is an absolutely modern structure built in 1956 over the *parinirvāṇa*-image of Buddha, fashioned in the Gupta period.

#### 68. STRUCTURAL REMAINS ON THE GṚIDHRAKŪṬA

P. 73.

#### 69. SCULPTURED STELE FROM AMARAVATI

(now in the Archaeological Museum, Amaravati).

Pp. 74 and 203.

In the photograph is seen one of the faces of the stele of greenish limestone raised at Amaravati in the late second century B.C. This particular face depicts Buddha's last journey from Vaiśālī to Kuśinagara where he attained *nirvāṇa*.

The inscribed labels are of great help in identifying the scenes carved on the face. The trees on the dexter (lower portion) represent the sacred *śrikṣha*-*chaitya*s of Vaiśālī. The tree before which a child is presented by a bent figure is the particularly sacred Bahuputra-chaitya where the people used to pray for sons.

The seated figure with folded hands in front of the footprints of Buddha on the sinister represents Māra exhorting Buddha to pass away, when he was in the Chāpāla-chaitya.

The barrel-vaulted apsidal structure immediately beyond Māra stands for the Mahāvānā-kūṭāgāra-śālā where the presence of Buddha is indicated by the representation of feet below a seat over which is spread an umbrella.

On the dexter of the Bahuputra-chaitya is an inscribed label meaning 'elephant's look'. Buddha is said to have bade farewell to Vaiśālī with an elephant's look before he proceeded towards Kuśinagara.

The river with turbulent current depicted immediately behind the vaulted structure is possibly the turbulent stream which Buddha created to prevent the Lichchhavis from following him on his journey to Kuśinagara. The alms-bowl which Buddha gave to the Lichchhavis as a memento is probably the one seen floating on the stream.

The damaged relief with only two mourning figures extant on the top is a part of the scene of *parinirvāṇa*.

#### 70. SEALING OF THE NĀLANDĀ-MAHĀVIHĀRA

(now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 67 and 87.

The terracotta sealing reads *Śrī-Nālandā-mahāvihāryārya-bhikṣu-saṅghasya* ('Of the community of the venerable monks of the auspicious Nālandā-mahāvihāra').

Above the legend is a wheel flanked by two deer, the symbolical representation of the First Sermon in the Deer-Park, a motif accepted by almost all the *mahāvihāras* of India in course of time.

#### 71. TEMPLE I AND MONASTERY AT SAHETH

P. 77.

Of about the tenth century A.D., Temple I is located in the middle of the spacious courtyard of a large monastery which with its four wings of the brick-built cells is of the *chatuḥ-śālā* type. In front of the cells is a verandah running along the four sides of the courtyard. Very little of the superstructure of the temple which has a *maṇḍapa* is now preserved.



**72. MAIN TEMPLE AT NĀLANDĀ (SITE 3)**

P. 88.

The staircase (on which are seen visitors), of the sixth phase, leads to the extant top which contains the lowest portion of the shrine-chamber.

The two tower-like *stūpas* with stucco-work are perched at the corners of the platform of the fifth phase. These *stūpas* as well as those at the ground-level were exposed after removing the filling of the seventh phase, a portion of which is seen abutting the staircase of the sixth phase.

**73. STUCCO-WORK OF THE MAIN TEMPLE (SITE 3) AT NĀLANDĀ**

P. 88.

The photograph covers a portion of the façade of the platform and side of the staircase of the fifth phase (sixth century A.D.) of the temple. The figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas, executed in stucco, reveal the consummate skill of the artist who modelled them.

**74. BRONZE IMAGE OF TĀRĀ FROM KURKIHAR**

(now in the Patna Museum).

Pp. 17 and 90.

Among the Buddhist goddesses Tārā occupies the most exalted position. In the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna centres the number of her images was found to be second only to that of Buddha. Her popularity was due to her role as a saviour of mankind from all kinds of perils. Her characteristic attributes are a blue lotus and *vara-mudrā*. Of fine workmanship, the image (11½ in. high) is of about the ninth century A.D.

Copyright: Patna Museum.

**75. GOLD-PLATED BRONZE IMAGE OF LOKEŚVARA FROM KURKIHAR**

(now in the Patna Museum).

Pp. 17 and 90.

The most popular Bodhisattva of the Buddhists was Avalokiteśvara noted for his great compassion. He is conceived of in many forms. In his simplest form, he holds the stalk of a lotus with his left hand and displays *vara-mudrā* with his right. Of about the eleventh-twelfth century A.D., the image is 10 in. high.

**76. RAILING AT BHARHUT**

A portion of the railing with the adjoining pillar of the eastern gateway of the Main Stūpa as found at Bharhut (now housed in the Indian Museum, Calcutta).

Pp. 11, 26 and 92 ff.

**77. EASTERN GATEWAY OF STŪPA I AT SANCHI**

Pp. 11, 26 and 97.

**78. INTERIOR OF CAVE 4 AT BAGH**

P. 100.

**79. BRONZE IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM PHOPHNAR**

(now in the National Museum, New Delhi).

Pp. 15 and 91.



With both shoulders covered by a *saṅghāṭī* the figure stands in *sama-pāda* with its right palm in *abhaya-mudrā*.

On the pedestal is a dedicatory record, in characters of the fifth or sixth century A.D., of Śākya-bhikṣhukāchārya Buddhadāsa.

The height of the image with the pedestal is 1 ft. 8 in.

80. FAÇADE OF A *CHAITYA-GRIHA* (CAVE 12) AT DHAMNAR  
P. 105.

81. BRONZE IMAGE OF LOKEŚVARA  
(now in the Srinagar Museum).  
P. 109.

Of fine workmanship, the image is consecrated during the reign of Queen Diddā.

82. STONE IMAGE OF PADMAPĀṆI FROM PANDRETHAN  
(now in the Srinagar Museum).  
P. 110.

83. TWO PAGES OF THE *PRAJÑAPĀRAMITĀ* MANUSCRIPT FROM GILGIT  
Pp. 22 and 113.  
Courtesy: Nalinaksha Dutt

84. TERRACED BASE OF A *STŪPA* AT PARASPORA  
P. 112.

85. PAVEMENT AND PLATFORM AT HARWAN  
P. 111.

86. RELIC-CASKET FROM SHAH-JI-KI-DHERI  
(now in the Peshawar Museum).  
Pp. 21, 119 and 120.

87. *STŪPA*-COURT, CHAPELS AND MONASTERY AT TAKHT-I-BAHI  
Pp. 120 and 121.

88. DHARMARĀJIKĀ AT TAXILA  
Pp. 117, 125 and 126.

89. MAITREYA AT JAULIAN  
P. 126.

Bodhisattva Maitreya, the Future Buddha, according to the Buddhist belief, is waiting in the Tushita heaven till his time comes to appear on earth as Buddha. The antiquity of his images goes back to the Kushān times. In the earlier images he is usually associated with a nectar-flask.

Modelled in stucco, the present image, of about the fifth century A.D., is in *dhyāna*-



*mudrā*. The neck of a flask is held by the gap between two fingers of the left palm of the Bodhisattva.

**90. BUDDHA FROM MIRPUR-KHAS**

(now in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay),

P. 132.

Of about the beginning of the fifth century A.D., the terracotta image is in *dhyāna-mudrā*.

**91. STŪPA-SHAPED SANCTUARY AT KOLVI**

Pp. 52 and 138.

**92. STŪPA-SHAPED SANCTUARY AT BINNAYAGA**

Pp. 52, 139 and 140.

**93. TERRACOTTA IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM DEVNIMORI**

P. 145.

Of the fourth century A.D., the figure, with both shoulders covered, is in *dhyāna-mudrā*. The influence of Gandhāra is felt in the image.

**94. TERRACOTTA IMAGE OF BUDDHA FROM DEVNIMORI**

P. 145

Of the fourth century A.D., the image differs from the preceding both in drapery and facial features.

**95. CAVE 26 AT SANA**

P. 146.

**96. CAVE 30 AT TALAJA**

P. 148.

**97. INTERIOR OF THE CHAITYA-GRĪHA AT BHAJA**

Pp. 12, 47, 48, 151 and 152.

**98. SCULPTURED RIGHT WALL OF THE VERANDAH OF CAVE 18 AT BHAJA**

P. 152.

**99. VERANDAH OF THE CHAITYA-GRĪHA AT BEDSA**

Pp. 48, 153 and 154.

**100. A COUPLE ON THE WALL OF THE VERANDAH OF THE CHAITYA-GRĪHA  
at Karla**

Pp. 48 and 155.

**101. CAPITALS OF TWO PILLARS OF THE CHAITYA-GRĪHA AT KARLA**

Pp. 49, 155 and 156.



102. *CHAITYA-GRHA* OF THE BHŪTA-LEṆA GROUP AT JUNNAR  
P. 160.
103. CAVE 7 OF THE GAṆEṢA-LEṆA GROUP AT JUNNAR  
Pp. 33 and 160.
104. FRIEZE ON THE FAÇADE OF THE *CHAITYA-GRHA* AT KONDANE  
P. 162.
105. *CHAITYA-GRHA* AT KONDIVTE  
Pp. 44 and 163.
106. AVALOKITEŚVARA AS A SAVIOUR FROM PERILS  
in Cave 90 at Kanheri.  
P. 165.
107. A COUPLE ON THE FAÇADE OF THE HALL OF THE *CHAITYA-GRHA* AT  
KANHERI  
P. 167.
108. FAÇADE OF THE *CHAITYA-GRHA* AT NASIK  
Pp. 48 and 169.
109. FAÇADE OF CAVE 3 AT NASIK  
Pp. 33 and 171.
110. ENTRANCE TO CAVE 4 AT PITALKHORA  
P. 173.  
The stately figures of the *dvāra-pālas* with a strong robust body and beaming face are particularly arresting. The vacant semicircular space between the two elephants was originally occupied by Lakshmi.
111. FAÇADE OF CAVE 19 AT AJANTA  
Pp. 16, 50 and 177.
112. INTERIOR OF CAVE 26 AT AJANTA  
Pp. 16, 50 and 177.
113. INTERIOR OF CAVE 2 AT AJANTA  
Pp. 16 and 178.
114. INTERIOR OF CAVE 3 AT AURANGABAD  
Pp. 179 and 180.



**115. DANSEUSE AMIDST MUSICIANS IN CAVE 7 AT AURANGABAD**

P. 181.

**116. PORTION OF THE HALL OF THE SECOND FLOOR OF CAVE 12 AT ELLORA**

P. 188.

**117. INSCRIBED AND SCULPTURED PILLAR FROM SANNATHI**

P. 190.

**118. RELIEVED SLAB FROM SANNATHI**

P. 190.

It depicts Buddha (symbolically represented by footprints in front of a throne) below the *Bodhi* tree.

**119. BRONZE IMAGE OF MAITREYA FROM MELAYUR**

(now in the Government Museum, Madras).

P. 193.

Of about the ninth century A.D., the gold-plated image is of fine workmanship.

Copyright: Government Museum, Madras.

**120. BRONZE IMAGE OF MAITREYA FROM NAGAPATTINAM**

(now in the Government Museum, Madras).

P. 197.

Stylistically, the image has been assigned to the Chola period.

Copyright: Government Museum, Madras.

**121. CHINESE PAGODA AT NAGAPATTINAM**

Pp. 196 and 197.

**122. IMAGE OF BUDDHA AT KANCHIPURAM**

P. 194.

**123. RELIC-CASKETS FROM THE SOUTHERN *Āṣṭaka* OF THE MAHĀCHAITYA**

at Amaravati (now in the Archaeological Museum, Amaravati).

Pp. 21, 28 and 202.

Below the caskets are seen their respective contents.

**124. A MINOR *STŪPA* AT AMARAVATI**

P. 202.

Although reduced to a low mound, the available remains are interesting on account of the profusely carved limestone slabs forming the drum-façade.

The diameter of the *stūpa*, according to A. Rea, is only 11 ft. Compared to the dimensions of the *stūpa*, the sculptured slabs are large. This has led some scholars to believe that the sculptured slabs originally belonged to the Mahāchaitya, and only at a late date they have



been fixed against the drum of the minor *stūpa* located outside the south gateway of the Mahāchaitya.

The slabs are now in the Archaeological Museum at Amaravati.

#### 125. SITE 9 AT NAGARJUNAKONDA

P. 206.

#### 126. SCULPTURED SLAB FROM NAGARJUNAKONDA

(now in the Archaeological Museum, Nagarjunakonda).

Pp. 14 and 208.

The limestone slab formed one of the series of slabs that veneered the façade of the drum of a *stūpa*. It furnishes a good idea about the form of the *stūpas* and their embellishments of the third century B.C. at Nagarjunakonda.

#### 127. VESSANTARA JĀTAKA ON A COPING FROM GOLI

(now in the Government Museum, Madras).

Pp. 94 and 210.

In the photograph we find only a portion of the *Vessantara Jātaka*, which forms the theme of this particular slab of limestone. On the left Vessantara is seen driving a bullock-cart; his wife and two children are within the wagon. Amidst the assemblage are Brahmins asking for the gift of the bullocks. The result of this gift is depicted in the next scene where Vessantara and his wife are now in the role of the gifted bullocks, the children being within the cart. The accosting figures in front of Vessantara are supplicants who are asking for the cart. Vessantara made this gift too. Of the next scene, only the figure of Vessantara's wife carrying one of the children is visible in the photograph.

Copyright: Government Museum, Madras.

#### 128. EPISODE OF NANDA ON A LIMESTONE COPING FROM GOLI

(now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

Pp. 4, 14 and 210.

After his forced conversion, Nanda was unable to take to his monastic life in a happy way, as he pined for his beautiful wife Sundari. In order to cure Nanda's inordinate attachment to his wife, Buddha took the despondent monk to Śakra's court full of celestial nymphs of ravishing beauty. Nanda found to his delight that these nymphs were as much superior in beauty to Sundari as she was to the ugly monkey encountered on the way to Śakra's paradise.

In the extreme right of the photograph Buddha with Nanda (not shown in the photograph) is seen flying towards Śakra's paradise, while a monkey is seen seated on the stump of a tree. Next, Buddha and Nanda are in Śakra's court where Buddha points towards the celestial nymphs.

Copyright: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

#### 129. MĀNDHĀTĀ ON A SLAB FROM JAGGAYYAPETA

(now in the Government Museum, Madras).

P. 211.

The limestone slab formed part of the veneer of the drum of the Main Stūpa.

The relief depicts the universal monarch (*chakravartin*) Māndhātā with his seven treasures,



namely, wheel, gem, queen, general, minister, horse and elephant. With his raised right hand he is causing a shower of coins and jewels.

Copyright: Government Museum, Madras.

**130. MAIN STŪPA AT GUMMADIDURRU**

Pp. 14 and 212.

The drum was embellished in the third century A.D. with slabs carved with the motif of elaborate *stūpas*. Between the slabs were pilasters. Over the slabs and pilasters ran a frieze.

The figure of Buddha on the sinister is an addition of the sixth or seventh century A.D.

**131. TEMPTATION AND ASSAULT OF MĀRA ON A SLAB FROM GHANTASALA**  
(now in the Musée Guimet, Paris).

Pp. 2 and 216.

The limestone slab formed part of the stone veneer of the Main Stūpa. It depicts Māra's assault and retreat and Māra's daughters tempting in vain Buddha, the latter's presence indicated symbolically by a throne below the *Bodhi* tree.

Copyright: Musée Guimet, Paris.

**132. IMAGES OF BUDDHA**

in front of the *stūpa* within the structural *chaitya-griha* at Guntupalli.

P. 217.

**133. STRUCTURAL CHAITYA-GRIHA AT GUNTUPALLI**

Pp. 45, 46 (fig. 15) and 217.

**134. ROCK-CUT CHAITYA-GRIHA AT GUNTUPALLI**

Pp. 44, 45 (fig. 14) and 218.

**135. MAIN STŪPA ON BOJJANNAKONDA NEAR SANKARAM**

P. 219.

**136. BUDDHIST REMAINS ON GURUBHAKTAKONDA NEAR RAMATIRTHAM**

Pp. 220 and 221.

**137. CIRCULAR CHAITYA-GRIHA AND STŪPAS AT SALIHUNDAM**

Pp. 45 and 222.

**138. MONASTERY I AT RATNAGIRI**

Pp. 228-30.

**139. DOOR-FRAME OF MONASTERY I AT RATNAGIRI**

P. 229.

The image of Buddha visible through the opening of the door is within the shrine of the monastery.



**140. MĀRICHĪ FROM KHICHING**

(now in the Baripada Museum).

P. 233.

The three-headed (one sow-like) goddess carries in her right hands a needle, an *ankuśa* (upper portion broken), arrows and a *vajra* and in left hands a string (?), a noose, a bow and a bough of an *atoka* tree. Her chariot is drawn by seven pigs, the charioteer being Rāhu.

The back-slab is inscribed with the Buddhist creed and a dedicatory record in characters of about the eleventh century A.D.

**141. MAIN SANCTUARY AT PAHARPUR**

Pp. 16, 241 and 242.

**142. TERRACOTTA PLAQUES FOUND AT MAINAMATI**

Pp. 244 and 245.

**FRONTISPIECE : HEAD OF BUDDHA, SARNATH**



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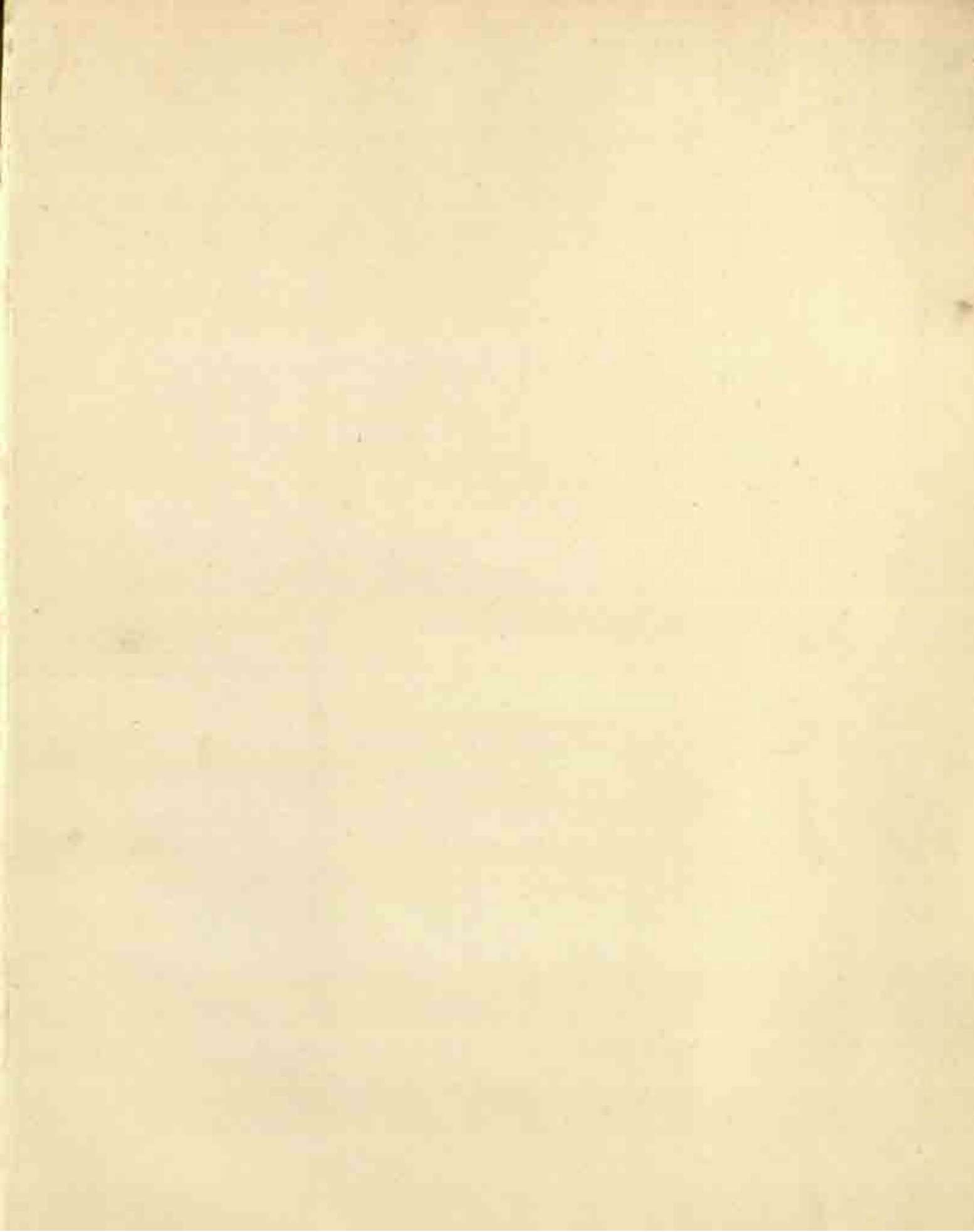
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